

THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine

Elven Realms



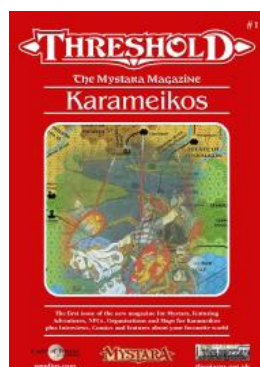
The tenth issue of the Mystara Magazine, featuring Elves of Mystara, and their countless Realms.

Previous Issues

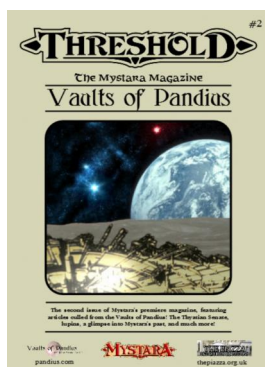
Previous Issues

Issues #1 to #9 of **THRESHOLD** - the Mystara Magazine, are available for download from the Vaults of Pandius website.

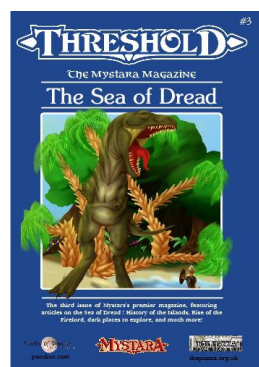
Also available at the same location are higher resolution versions of the maps that were included in the issue's PDF, allowing greater detail to be viewed.



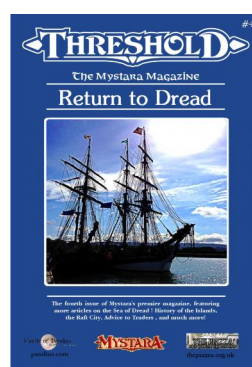
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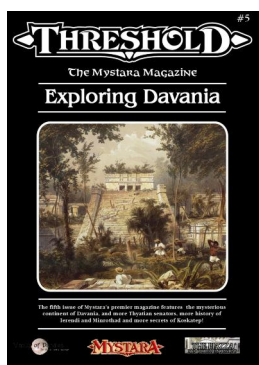
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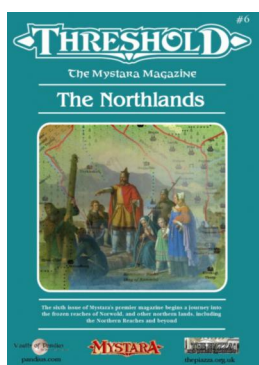
#3
The Sea of Dread



#4
Return to Dread



#5
Exploring Davania



#6
The Northlands



#7
Exploring Norwold



#8
Warlords of Norwold



#9
Hollow World

THRESHOLD

ISSUE # 10

Editorial Credits.....	<u>2</u>
Editorial.....	<u>3</u>
This Issue's Contributors.....	<u>4</u>
Call for Contributors.....	<u>6</u>
Elven Calendar and Holidays.....	<u>7</u>
The Elven Clans and Their Migrations.....	<u>10</u>
Elves of Mystara - Elven Class Variants.....	<u>39</u>
The Fall and Rise of the Canolbarth.....	<u>65</u>
Vesperlands Atlas.....	<u>125</u>
Savage Seas.....	<u>140</u>
Who's Who in the Wyrmssteeth part 3.....	<u>152</u>
The Skars' Legacy.....	<u>166</u>
Koskatep level 8 - Mokrath, Serpent Eye.....	<u>182</u>
Artwork Sources and Credits.....	<u>201</u>
Next Issue.....	<u>208</u>

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Thanks To: The Mystara Community, for your support, hard work, and dedication to Mystara.

The aims of *Threshold* magazine:

- to provide a venue for community members to present material
- to promote the Vaults of Pandius and the material there
- to increase the exposure of existing and new articles
- to encourage authors to revisit and revitalise existing articles
- to motivate interest in Mystara in general

Under the Emerald Canopy...

Though born in Houston Texas, where my parents played in the Symphony, I mainly grew up in Montana, a state roughly the size of Germany, yet having a population of only 725,000. Before playing in the Symphony, my father had been a navigator and waist gunner on a B-17 bomber during WWII. That experience convinced him he hated living in close confines with his fellow humans, and consequently abhorred hotels. Therefore, shortly after my parents were married, they bought an Airstream trailer. Our family vacations were spent hiking and camping in the national forests, mainly in or along the perimeter of the Beartooth-Absaroka Wilderness. Often, hiking trips took us up the eleven and twelve thousand foot mountain slopes of the Beartooth Range, which remained snow-packed until July, with many areas permanently covered by vast glaciers. Standing upon the crest of a high mountain ridge, looking down into the coniferous forests of the mountain valleys, it was not difficult imagining campfires below as Elven encampments, or trailer lights dotting campsites as Elven villages, snug and secure in the timbered mountain vales.

As I grew older, and became more political, elves held a place in my imagination as a superior race, infinitely more in tune with the natural world around them. Having long lifespans and slow growing populations, the elves seemed acutely aware of the consequences of their actions, and the changes they wrought on the face of the planet.

As I grew older still, and less political; I came to envy their long lives. However; trying to envision life amid immense magical forests filled with massive oaks and sentinels,

buttressing elaborate elven palaces, I was incapable of completely grasping their world. Magic, long-lived races, and a lack of technology change many aspects of societies, and the delicate balance of power existing between them. Although trying to imagine what these cultures are like, to a certain extent, they remain unrecognizable. Yet these foreign cultures and long-lived races add depth, taking us to a place outside the realm of our *reality*, and this is perhaps the very root of fantasy. A fantasy world *is* supposed to have fantastic elements...otherwise it's just Earth! No fantastical race seems to capture our imagination quite so completely as the idealistic elves, and quite often they are a hallmark of many fantasy settings.

Whatever inspiration or affinity you have for elves, hopefully this issue will provide plenty of material to further spur your imagination. From the elven calendar and its holidays, to elven class variants. Past and future timelines and maps give visual and chronological order to elven events. There is also additional material for setting the CM5 module in Alfheim and playing the mysterious Vesperland Elves of the Hollow Moon, as well as continuing articles from past issues. Finally there are two forays in the wilderlands of Norwold and among the pirates of the Savage Coast! With a little bit of luck, there is something in this issue to suit everyone's tastes.

So without further ado, let us leave the cities and pastures behind, and enter the Elven World...

Joseph Setorius (julius_cleaver)
Issue 10 Editor-in-Chief

This Issue's Contributors

Joseph Setorius (*aka julius_cleaver*) began roleplaying in '79, & besides a few brief intervals is constantly involved in one campaign or another. Though a longtime Mystaran DM & player; including a thirteen year campaign throughout the eighties & early nineties, which helped create much of his material; he is relatively new to the Mystara online community. Besides Mystara he enjoys original settings & campaigns set in Greyhawk, Harn, and Dark Sun. A map loving surveyor, his other interests include reading, hiking, and playing/teaching piano.

Even though **Sturm** (*a.k.a. Francesco Defferrari*) loves any alternate world, he believes Mystara is incomparably the best for its vibrant community endlessly delving into ethnography, linguistics and history just to make a little sense of it. Something like the real world, but with dragons.

Craig Antoun (*a.k.a. Irondrake*) was first introduced to D&D by a friend in 1981, which began for him a long and rewarding journey as a Game Master that continues to this day. Having experienced most editions of the D&D game, Craig has always been drawn back to the BECMI/RC edition, which he finds elegant in its simplicity, yet rich in possibilities. In early 2014 he returned to managing his first Mystara campaign, which previously ran from 1984 to 1993.

Robin (*at The Piazza, Robin D elsewhere*) Female from 1962, she began playing D&D since its earliest days as far back as 1978, soon after becoming "addicted". Ultimately, she was intimately bound to the world of Mystara, because of its complex diversity. A current compiler of massive materials available on Vaults of Pandius & her "Breath of Mystara" blog; and former Teacher of Biology, Ecology, Chemistry, Physics, once travelling all over Europe as a stage dancer including house parties. Once called "The Fletcher" at UK GenCon by Bruce Heard for her extensive compilation in "Revenge of the Little Ones".

DesertNomad started with Mentzer's basic set in the late 80's and has played in many fantasy worlds since then but always keeps returning to Mystara, drawn by the massive effort that creative fans have put into keeping the world alive. He has had a soft spot for CM5 since he was given it as a gift on his 12th birthday.

John Calvin (*aka Chimpman*) is fascinated by the depth of Mystaran history, and has always wanted to share that more fully with players. To that end he has been developing sub-settings like The Hollow Moon and Mystara 2300 BC.

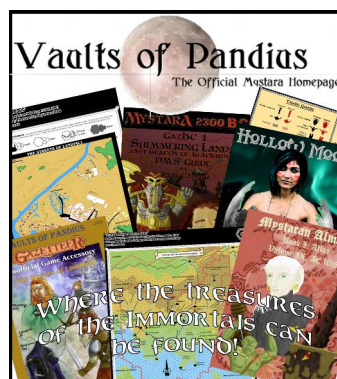
I. "Meandrathel" Calvin enjoys drawing fantasy, and animals that can kill. Namely wolves, dragons, horses, and most large felines. Human animal hybrids are not excluded either; she often draws human versions of her favorite animals. She does, however, despise drawing things that are unbearingly cute. It's a pretty awful thing to do.

Giampaolo Agosta (a.k.a. *Agathokles*) agrees with Schiller that man "is only completely a man when he plays". Therefore, he makes a point of taking gaming seriously, and real life casually. Besides Mystara, his gaming interests include (among others) Dark Sun, Planescape, Ravenloft, Birthright, Call of Cthulhu, and Witchcraft RPG.



FROM THE VAULTS OF PANDIUS

Some features in issues of Threshold carry a "From the Vaults of Pandius" tagline. As one of our stated aims is "to promote the Vaults of Pandius and the material there", we hope you will enjoy these revised or extended treasures from that [website](#).



FROM the
Mystara
FORUM at



Some features in issues of Threshold carry a "From the Mystara Forum at The Piazza" tagline. These Discussion Boards are an active and dynamic home of creativity for the Mystara community and many other game worlds. We hope you will enjoy the



The Piazza
The Premier community
for discussion of
D&D Campaign Worlds
<http://www.thepiazza.org.uk/bb/index.php>

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Threshold editorial team invites all fans of the Mystara setting to submit contributions to the next issues of the magazine.

We are looking especially for contributions fitting the following themes:

Issue 11 -

Isle of Dawn, Thyatis and Alphatia

The editorial team will accept proposals on the Isle of Dawn, Thyatis, Alphatia and their dependencies: Ochalea, Pearl Islands, Alatians, Bellisaria, Esterhold and other colonies.

Proposal Deadline: Expired, but proposal could still be submitted if the author is confident that the article will be completed by the below deadline

Manuscript Deadline:

February 10th, 2016

Issue Published: End March 2016

Call for proposals for main themes of forthcoming issues (2016):

Ages Past:

The editorial team will accept proposals on Mystara's past ages: Y'hog, Blackmoor, Mystara 2300 BC, Taymora, Nithia, or any culture or location existing before present day Mystara.

Articles about other topics are still welcome and the editorial team will evaluate their publication for any upcoming issue, taking into account available space and the issue's theme.

Threshold accepts and invites submissions of extended or revised versions of works having appeared on The Piazza or Vaults of Pandius.

Contributions may include, but are not limited to: Articles-- short stories, short adventure modules, NPCs, historical treatises and timelines, geographical entries, new monsters and monster ecologies, etc.; and Illustrations-- portraits, maps, heraldry, illustrations, etc.

The Threshold editorial team strives for edition neutrality, but edition specific articles (e.g., conversions) are also accepted. Statistics for new monsters and NPCs may be included in articles (e.g., adventure modules, new monsters or NPCs) in any version of Dungeons & Dragons. The editorial team also offers help in providing conversions to some specific rules set. Including BECM/RC, 2nd Edition, 3rd edition/Pathfinder. However, they should be limited to a minimum -- for most NPCs, it is sufficient to mention class, level, and alignment. For important NPCs, a one or two line stat block may be included.

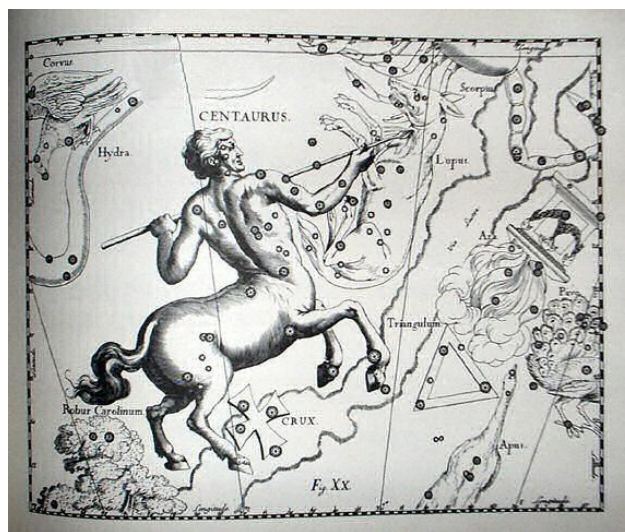
Elven Calendar and Holidays

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

This article is an expansion of a previous work of mine, [“Updated elven holidays”](#) in the Vaults of Pandius. No canon source ever listed Mystara’s elven holidays; however CM7 “The Tree of Life” contained a star map with displaying the names of the months. In the map the exact correlations to Thyatians months are not explicit, so the ones below are just my proposals. Elven names for the months are vaguely inspired by J.R.R. Tolkien’s Sindarin. Some holidays are loosely related to holidays appearing in “The Principalities of Glantri”, “Minrothad Guilds”, and “The Shadow Elves” Gazetteers.



*FROM
THE VAULTS
OF PANDIUS*



An image of the constellation of the Centaur

The Elven Months

These names are used by elves of the Known World and beyond, but elven sages do not agree about the first use of the names. Some scholars state they were conceived by Ilsundal, others that they were in use even before him, in ancient Evergrun before the Great Rain of Fire.

Thyatian	English	Elven
Nuwmont	Snowdrop	Lanloss
Vatermont	Gloomlight	Calfuin
Thaumont	Frostend	Methele
Flaurmont	Youngfire	Nethur
Yarthmont	Seedwell	Eremae
Klarmont	White-ewe	Silaras
Felmont	Richsun	Anovras
Fyrmont	Sweetlife	Melucil
Ambyrmont	Copperfield	Gaerid
Sviftmont	Goldharvest	Colleuth
Eirmont	Redtree	Ornar
Kaldmont	Darkwood	Tawadol

THE ELVEN HOLIDAYS¹



1st day of Snowdrop: First Day of the Year² or Good Sprite Day³, a celebration of dances, banquets and practical jokes is celebrated from sunrise long into the night; often friendly fairy folk join the festivities. Some elven cultures also exchange gifts, as do the Hin of the Five Shires during this day.

¹ Even if these holidays are often observed by many elven clans, elven regional tradition might celebrate different festival variations. Shadowelves and Schattenalfen have a completely different calendar marking their own holidays, and is perhaps also the case for elven clans living outside the Known World. Elves living outside Alfheim often celebrate the holidays of the nation in which they inhabit as well.

² Several elven sages think the first day of the Elven Year was originally the first of Frostend, while others claim it was the first of White-ewe.

³ The Erewan of Glantri use this name for the day, and most likely the Alfheim elves as well.

1st day of Frostend: First day of Spring and in ancient Evergrun marked the first day of the year according to some elven scholars. Also known as the Day of Rebirth by some elven clans. Celebrated with evening feasts and dancing.

8th day of Frostend: Spring break, similar to the Glantrian holiday of the same name. Elves refrain from work during the day, instead engaging in playful activities.

12th day of Youngfire: Winter's end festival, similar to Merchant Prince day of Minrothad. Particularly heartfelt by elven clans living in colder climates. Some clans give gifts to children, while in some lands wizards prepare spectacular fireworks. Often celebrated also with a great banquet at midday.

9th day of Seedwell: Day of Births; similar to the Shadow Elves holiday of the same name. Marriages often take place this day, and is considered a propitious time to conceive a child. There are often banquets and dances in the evening.

1st day of White-ewe: The Summer Solstice. A bonfire feast is held in the evening. First day of the year in ancient Sylvan Realm according to some elven scholars.

15th day of White-ewe: Night of the Moon. Elven wizards consider this day particularly favourable for magic rituals, and common elves usually feast and dance throughout the night; but the moon does not always glow red as in Glantri.

15th day of Richsun: The High Summer festival, also celebrated in the Five Shires and Ethengar (though quite differently) and Day

of Valerias in Thyatis and other nations. Elven clans usually stage or visit a market during the day, and feast and dance into the night.

27th day of Richsun: Summer celebration day, a festival which later inspired Minrothad's All's Reckless day. Elven clans normally hold friendly contests or jousts during this day.

1st day of Copperfield: Harvest day, the first day of autumn is celebrated by elves with a feast where many fruits and sweets are prepared and eaten. Though many also are preserved for the coming winter.

17th day of Copperfield: Mealiden day. Particularly celebrated in Alfheim as a lighthearted event; however, one which has the ultimate purpose of testing the Realm's defenses, training warriors or driving away dangerous monsters.

27th day of Copperfield: Day of the Last Sun. Many elven clans organize markets, either welcoming trading caravans or organizing their own, to secure provisions for the winter. Additionally, any housing or building maintenance is handled. A feast held in the evening often welcomes travellers and strangers.

1st day of Darkwood: Farewell to the Sun in various cultures and Ixion's Day. Elven clans normally celebrate with great feasts lasting all day and night, broken by numerous rests.

15th day of Darkwood: Snow day. The festival which inspired the Ice Games of Glantri. Elves usually mold snow and ice into magnificent structures, or engage in competitions of endurance and accuracy. At least in the lands where there is snow at this time of the year.

25th day of Darkwood: Midwinter festival. This celebration inspired the Minrothad holiday of the same name. Many elven clans give gifts, and decorate their dwellings with colours meant to propitiate the return of Spring. Such decorations normally adorn homes until at least the 2nd day of Snowdrop or longer.

28th day of Darkwood: Year's End Fest. Many elven clans hold great banquets and dances, which carry over to the festivities of the next day. For some clans, rituals to chase evil spirit away are carried out, even hunting encroaching undead when necessary.

The Elven Clans and Their Migrations

A short treatise on the Elven clans of Mystara, with a history of their migrations, compiled by Thiserstian of Alphatia, magician and scholar of the Imperial University.

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

HISTORY OF THE ELVEN MIGRATIONS

This history will use the Thyatian dating system, although elves count the years from the foundation of their clans, or from their settlement in the place where they live, or the Great Rain of Fire, or the fall of the Sylvan Realm.

*Thiserstian,
in Alpha, Outer World, AY 2009*

¶ More than ten years later¹, I felt the necessity to revise my work on the elven people of the world, adding all of the information I have discovered in the meantime. These updates and addenda are prefixed by the symbol ¶.

*Thiserstian,
in Jafilia, Hollow World, AY 2020*

¹ The original version of this article was written by me more than ten years ago, using limited canon and fanon resources. The parts prefixed by the symbol ¶ were added now and inspired by more recent fanon resources and discussion about the history of the Elves, such as [this thread](#) and [this one](#) at The Piazza Forums.

6000 BC Ordana, the goddess of nature that has created, protected and cared for the elves until now, leaves them free to create their own destiny. The elves found the nation of Evergrun. They have contacts with the halflings and enduks but keep away from the Serpentine Empire². In Evergrun (the evergreen³) the elves of the land (or Calaquendi, the elves of light) are divided in the first two clans: the Erendyl (Noble sons of the sun, warriors and rangers) and Feadil (Bright spirits, wizards and clerics). Another, completely different clan also exists: the Aquarendi, the elves of the sea, who claim to be the most ancient elves⁴.

¶ This story, quite a tenet of faith for us elves, seems less and less convincing to me with the passing years. It probably just roughly marks the time in which elves begin to care a bit more for the rest of the world around them.

² Most of this comes from James Mishler's "[The Age of Blackmoor](#)" timeline

³ In brackets the meaning of the elven terms in Thyatian, when known.

⁴ See PC3 "The Sea People", page 9. As far as I know, the only fanon theory about the origins of the Aquarendi is in Marco Dalmonte's "[Timeline for Wendar-Denagoth-Ghyr-Northern Wildlands](#)", but contradicts PC3. More on them after the GRoF also in "[The Sea of Steam and the Farend Ocean](#)" by LoZompatore.

It is well established among elven scholars, however, that at this time the first clan separation of the land elves occurred, due probably to the development of different philosophies. Therefore it is not incorrect to say that this date could well mark the beginning of modern elven history.

I would like to know more about the history of the Aquarendi before this date, and their origin, but I haven't any reliable information at the moment.



Idealized image of Evergrun

5500 BC The gold dragons help the enduks and the halflings in their fight against the Serpentine Empire, and help the Oltec humans and the northern dwarves against the Draconic empire. Elves remain outside the conflicts. Two new clans are born: the Grunalf (the green elves, the rangers) who split from the Erendyl, and the Shiye (the grays, the mysterious magicians) who split from the Feadil.

¶ I have found a clue that about this time, or shortly after, some Shiye may already have settled in the area of modern Alphatia and the Isle of Dawn, these elves may be connected to the mysterious Trueflowers¹, whose real elven clan name is unknown, and who still inhabit the Isle.

5000 BC The Elves are closely allied with halflings, good dragons and enduks. They found a colony of Evergrun a little further north, in what is called Grunland. The Grunalf elves going to live there begin to call themselves Verdier². Another clan, the Vyalia³

¹ No indication exists in canon or fanon, as far as I know, of elves in Alphatia before 800 BC, but I find it a bit odd that so many clans roamed Brun and Skothar but not Alphatia. Maybe some Shiye went there, and that's the true reason why Eyrindul chose the area. The Trueflowers instead are mentioned in M5, more details are in ["Trees of Life and the Vyalia, Shiye and Trueflower"](#).

² The elves of Minrothad. Gaz9 doesn't specify when the clan was born, but says they were already shipbuilders in the ancient elven homeland.

³ As far as I know the exact origin of the Vyalia is not detailed in canon, fan sources vary about the date of the creation of this clan. See ["Trees of Life and the Vyalia, Shiye and Trueflower"](#), ["Mealiden's Trees of Life"](#) and ["Trees of Life in Mystara"](#).

(children of the air) originates from Feadil and joins the Verdiere in Grunland. Other Grunalf move to the cold south and start calling themselves Wirdyl¹ (light of the snow). In Skothar the nation of Thonia is founded.

¶ Sources differ about the existence of the mysterious Vyalia before 1700 BC. Some scholars say they were part of the Verdier, others that they existed already in 5000 BC. The modern Thyatian branch is also divided in six minor clans, while that is not clear for the Traladaran branch.

4500 BC Some Aquarendi come out of the sea and live with the other elves on dry land. Others remain in the sea and spread from Davania to Brun. A clan of elves, the Meriallis² (travelers), which also originates from the Grunalf, settle in Skothar, just north of Thonia.

¶ I now believe not all the Aquarendi came out of the sea, but just a small part of them.

¹ The Wirdyl would be the ancestors of Icevale Elves of the Hollow World, see also the issue 9 of Threshold. Note that LoZompatore's [Map of Evergrun](#) and Jennifer Guerra's [list of Elven Clans](#) have a lot more clans in pre-cataclysmic Davania.

² I probably invented this clan just messing with the name of Menander Ithamis, Lord of the Northern Elves in DA1 "Adventures in Blackmoor". In ["Elven Migrations"](#) Havard also lists the Genander, Cumasti and Westryn, elven clans which I believe were introduced in the Blackmoor d20 Campaign Setting. They could all be derived from the Meriallis, or Genander could be the real name of the Meriallis. Cumasti and Westryn locations are depicted in [this map at the Comeback Inn](#) (Blackmoor forum).

Even if I originally thought no major elven migrations occurred before 4500 BC, new evidence³ has brought me to consider that some clans may have migrated to Brun and Skothar around 5000 BC or even earlier.

4000 BC The northern province of Thonia, Blackmoor, rebels against the Empire with the support of elves in the area. Shortly afterwards Blackmoor begins studying technomancy. Four clans settle in Brun, in the north, assuming the collective name of Kintanor⁴. They are the Celebryl (silver light), originating from the Erendyl; the Pelestyr (the defenders), originated from the Feadil; the Porador (people of the land) arising from the Grunalf; and the Gelbalf (elven gems) originating from the Shiye. From the Grunalf in Evergrun the clan Chossum (eternal wind), formed largely by merchants, also originate. From the Feadil come the Alhamil⁵ clan (sons of destiny).

¶ I recently had fortuitous access to some ancient Belcadiz books, shedding a whole new light on their history! I discovered they originated from the Alhamil around

³ In my article "New Blackmoor 3050 BC" in Threshold issue #2, I imagined that the ancestors of Shadowelves, Belcadiz, Shattenhalfen, Genalleth and Geffronell could have been in the area of the Known World well before the Great Rain of Fire. See individual notes about the clans.

⁴ An elven word which should simply mean 'a group of four'.

⁵ Ancestor of the Savage Coast and Belcadiz elves, which should have a common origin due to the supposed similarities in culture and language. Jennifer Guerra in ["History of Clan Alhambra"](#) used the word Alhambra for the clan, but I decided to change it to Alhamil as the original name should have been a little more 'elven'.

this time, and some of them settled in Brun, probably the modern Savage Coast, and Glantri before the Great Rain of Fire, calling themselves Alvanil¹. The Kintanor, the Four Clans of the modern Shadowelves, were probably settled instead in the area of modern Alfheim, hence their claim on the area.

I also originally believed that the Issarthyl, the modern Schattenalfen, originated from the Feadil only after the Great Rain of Fire, and were part of the Second Migration from Grunland. More recent studies on Shadowelf texts, however, has led me to think differently: it seems at least a part of the Issarthyl, calling themselves Loshenalfen², were already in the area of modern Glantri before the cataclysm.

¹ The origin of the Belcadiz is not explained in Gaz3. Gaz5 has only a small phrase hinting they could have been part of the second migration from Grunland. Several fan theories about them are [“Belcadiz Theory”](#), [“Another Belcadiz Theory”](#), [“New Belcadiz Theory”](#) and [“New Theory for Belcadiz and Ispans”](#). In Threshold issue #2 I decided to place them in Brun since before the Great Rain of Fire, but such a choice is not supported by canon sources.

² I used this theory in Threshold issue #2, after comparing Gaz13 with the Hollow World boxed set: while the latter seems to indicate the Schattenalfen were part of the second migration, the first one led me to think that the “Glantrian” Shadowelves who returned to the surface in 1950 BC and later settled Aengmor/Oenkmar were the Schattenalfen. This topic has been also discussed on The Piazza Forums [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#). Also, the German name of the Schattenalfen provides a possible link with the humans of Glantri and the High Thonians of ancient Blackmoor.

3500 BC Blackmoor flowers, and even the elves begin to use Technomancy. A clan is formed in Evergrun by elves who love technomancy: the Thiny³ (bright shades) originating from the Erendyl. The Geffronell⁴ elves (clouds of the North) originating from Grunalf, migrate to Brun, at a little distance from the four clans. Other Grunalf go to live in Grunland and call themselves the Gellereth⁵ (those who are reflected in the water).

¶ New evidence I found recently in Wendar history made me think that not only the Geffronell, but the Gellereth too, or at least a part of them, were already in Brun before the Great Rain of Fire⁶.

³ I devised this name for the clan that survived in Thimhallan up to (almost) present times, in [“City of Thimhallan”](#) by Ethan Deneault.

⁴ I originally used [“Wendar-Denagoth Timeline”](#) by Marco Dalmonte and Shawn Stanley about the Geffronell arriving in Brun around this time. Other fanon sources may differ, as far as I know the origin of the Geffronell was never explained in canon, as they are only hinted in X11.

⁵ I invented this clan name for the elves of Wendar to keep the name Genalleth for the elven name of the King detailed below and the nation of Wendar.

⁶ The Poor Wizard’s Almanac says in the Wendar entry that some elves went “near Blackmoor” before The Great Rain of Fire. As Blackmoor was placed in Skothar according to the Hollow World boxed set, I’ve decided to assume this refer to New Blackmoor, i.e. the colony founded were the modern Known World now is.



The Aquarendi

3100 BC The Aquarendi¹, displeased by the immoderate use of Technomancy, decide to return to the sea. From the Feadil originates the Sheyallia² (trees of the moon). From the Erendyl originates the Truedyl³ (honest and

¹ The Aquarendi migrations after this time are detailed in [“The Sea of Steam and the Farend Ocean”](#) by LoZompatore. According to the Hollow World boxed set migration map however some Aquarendi also lived in the area of the modern Known World, or in the seas near to it.

² The elves of Graakhalia introduced in *Voyages of the Princess Ark* and detailed also in *Champions of Mystara*.

³ They are the Gentle Folk now in the

bright): they leave for Grunland and reject Technomancy. In this time political conflicts have become common among the elves, and Thinyl and Chossum are the dominant clans.

3000 BC The Great Rain of Fire. Elven legends will attribute it to an event that happened in Evergrun shortly before the disaster: the murder of an Erendyl prince by a Thinyl elf. According to tradition, it was the first time that elven blood was shed by another elf. Evergrun becomes cold and uninhabitable, the elves flee to Grunland. In Brun the four clans take refuge underground, the Geffronell instead migrate south. The Meriallis, who according to tradition had become greedy for power and selfish, share the fate of Blackmoor and are annihilated. In the two following centuries the Davanian clans are divided into two parties, one who wants to preserve technomancy, the other that wants to return to the way of nature. Three new clans originate: from the Feadil: the Issarthyl (noble blades of the moon), technomancers; from the Shiye: the Kyrteallar⁴ (noble warriors), returnists; and from the Erendyl: the Eariel⁵ (those who are), returnists.

¶ The elven legend to explain the Great Rain of Fire is probably not true. As explained above, I also suspect the Issarthyl are a clan much more ancient than my initial

Hollow World, their clan name appears in the HW boxed set.

⁴ Originally created by Jeff Daly in [“Kwythellar Elves”](#) and later expanded by me in my work on Northwestern Davania which can be found in issue #5 of *Threshold*.

⁵ The Ee’aar elves of the Arm of the Immortal, detailed in [Dragon Magazine 200](#) and in [“Ee’aar and Enduks”](#).

theory. After more research in Shiye books, I've also begun to doubt the Meriallis were annihilated completely. Legends do exist about reclusive elves¹ still alive in the heartlands of Skothar.

2800 BC Led by the Erendyl prince Ilsundal the Returnists leave Grunland and begin the Long Walk. With Ilsundal the Erendyl, Feadil, Chossum, Grunalf, Shiye, Truedyl, Vyalia, Kyrteall and Eariel depart. In Grunland the Thiny, Alhamil, Sheyallia, Verdier, Wirdyl, Gellereth and Issarthyl remain.

¶ I have no definitive evidence about the status of the Truedyl, Vyalia, Verdier and Wirdyl, i.e. I do not know for certain if they joined the First or the Second migration. It's possible that the accounts are unreliable because these clans split, some following Ilsundal, some staying in Grunland. But later they rejoined, and the division was toned down in official histories.

Despite the mythology of Ilsundal leading the elves to the Sylvan Realm, it's quite clear to me that Ilsundal, at least at the beginning, had no intention whatsoever of going so far to the North. His group apparently tried to settle in Pelatan, failed probably for climatic reasons, then settled among the Hin of Shaerdon for at least two centuries, before being forced to move north to Adakkia around 2600 BC, probably by famine.

2500 BC Faced with the continuing deterioration of the climatic conditions in Grunland, the other clans, led by Genalleth,

¹ For example, see "[Calengaer, the green ocean](#)" by Frederic Perronet in the Vaults of Pandius.

king of the Gellereth, depart for the north. This Second Migration soon join with the first one on the northern coast of Davania. Only the Thiny remain in the south. In the course of a few centuries the advance of the ice will kill them all.

¶ Stories about king Genalleth have wild variations²: one says he did not exist, and the Gellereth directly descend from the elves of Blackmoor³. Another says he was the leader of the second migration, but an unshakeable supporter of technomancy, and Ilsundal killed him for that. Yet another says he was a wise sage that led the second migration, understanding Ilsundal's wisdom in abandoning technomancy. The most reliable account I found led me to think that Genalleth did lead his people from Evergrun toward Wendar, but before the Great Rain of Fire, and probably Enoreth led the rest of the clan to where he knew others of his clan lived, after the Great Rain of Fire.

If the Issarthyl and the Belcadiz were part of the Second Migration they too probably had relatives in the area of Glantri and meant to go there.

It seems the two migrations met approximately around this time in the area of the modern Adakkian Gulf, but were

² As far as I know, no canon source says that the Genalleth were part of the second migration, as only the Belcadiz are mentioned as part of it in Gaz 5. Some fanon sources say the Genalleth were already in Wendar ("[Wendar: A Mini Gazetteer](#)"), others that they came from the south ("[Wendar-Denagoth Timeline](#)" and "[Wendar timeline](#)"), so I've decided both ideas should be true.

³ "[Timeline for Wendar-Denagoth-Ghyr-Northern Wildlands](#)"

The Elven Clans and Their Migrations



forced to leave by hostile lizardmen. Some clans, following Enoreth, crossed the sea toward the Serpent Peninsula, while others went with Ilsundal to the area of modern Izonda¹.

The myth that the Thinyt all perished has been disproven by Alphatian explorations of Davania². There is evidence that the N'djatwa (see clan descriptions below) may be descended from them, and other groups of elves apparently still survive in different areas of southern Davania³

2300 BC In Izonda the Kyrteallar stop, driven away by the other elves after they decided to enslave a nation of humans. The others cross the sea, then the Eariel settle in the Arm of the Immortals, the Alhamil stop in the modern Savage Coast, the Vyalia go toward the east, where the nations of Traladara and Thyatis are now, the Sheyallia and the Verdier settle in the south of the Serpent Peninsula. The other clans continue their walk.

¹ Gaz 5 The Elves of Alfheim and the Hollow World Boxed Set migration map have two quite different migration routes for the Elves. In Gaz 5 the Elves go from Grunland to Pelatan, to Brasol, to Izonda, to the Immortal Arm, to Savage Coast, Sind and Glantri, then to the Midlands and the Sylvan Realm. In the HW boxed set migration map the Elves go from Grunland to Shaerdon (land of the Halfling) to Adakkia, to the Serpent Peninsula, where they split to the Sylvan Realm and the Known World. I have tried to use both sources in my migration map.

² See [Voyages of the Princess Ark](#) and ["City of Thimhallan"](#).

³ More information on these elves were

¶ I've understood from new investigations⁴ in Alfheim and Shiye history that the Kyrteallar were not driven away, but rather they drove away the other clans, trying to conquer a vast area with violence and magic.

It's impossible to ascertain which clans were now in the first migrations and which clans were in the second ones. For example, Sheyallia and Verdier⁵ were supposed to be with the second migration, but there are accounts stating instead that they went with Ilsundal to the Arm of the Immortals. I think the Verdier did go with him, but the Sheyallia followed Enoreth to the Serpent Peninsula. Or there was another forgotten division of the clans, and some Verdier followed Ilsundal while others stayed with Enoreth.

2200 BC Three clans (Issarthyl, Wirdyl and Truedyl) settle in the area of Glantri. The Verdier leave the Serpent Peninsula and settle in what is now Minrothad. The Gellereth settle north east of Glantri and found the nation of Genalleth, the modern nation of Wendar. Just north of their territories they meet the Geffronell.

published in Threshold issue #5.

⁴ See Threshold issue #5 for a history of Northwestern Davania.

⁵ Champions of Mystara, as reported in ["Elven Timeline"](#) by Christopher Cherrington, places both Meditor and Verdier in the Serpent Peninsula with the Sheyallia, at least for a short time. Gaz9 instead seems to imply they were with Ilsundal and left him only when his group left the Savage Coast to head toward Glantri.

¶ Oleyan¹ was apparently the Verdier leader who guided the Vyalia and the Meditor in the area that at the time was part of the human nation of Taymora.

It's not clear if a part of the Belcadiz also settled in the area of Glantri at this time. It seems that Ilsundal's group also crossed the Sind desert to come here, but then they turned back to go to the Sylvan Realm, maybe because the land could not support so many elves. The Truedyl however were probably part of Ilsundal's group, and they stayed in Glantri.

2100 BC Erendyl, Feadil, Chossum, Grunalf and Shiye arrive in the Sylvan Realm.

¶ It seems that they crossed central Brun before reaching the Sylvan Realms, leaving some small groups of elves along their trail. To the best of my knowledge, the clans of the second migration stayed in Glantri, but we cannot exclude that some individual Genalleth, or Belcadiz, or elves from any other clan went to the Sylvan Realm too, later leaving it like the others in 800 BC.

1950 BC The Shadowelves explore the surface near present Glantri, but do not meet any other elves, only hostile humans and humanoids.

¶ This bit of shadowelf history² is probably incorrect. This probably happened to the Schattenalfen. It's also very unlikely that they did not meet the other clans living in the area at the time.

¹ Mentioned in Gaz9 and detailed in ["Elven Timeline"](#) by Marco Dalmonte.

² Mentioned in Gaz13.

1800 BC The first Tree of Life is created by Ilsundal in Sylvan Realm. In the centuries following new clans are also formed in the Realm: The Longrunner (the real name of the clan is kept secret) from the Shiye and later the Callarii (noble leaves) from the Grunalf.

1700 BC Cataclysm in the area of modern Glantri. Minrothad detaches from the mainland and becomes a group of islands. The Meditor (those living on islands) separate from the Verdier. The Truedyl take refuge in the modern Five Shires, where they are later joined by halflings fleeing Davania. The halflins baptize the Truedyl: "The Gentle Folk". The Wirdyl flee in the Hollow World. The Issarthyl go underground, and here they meet the four clans of the Shadowelves.

¶ It is possible that the Schattenalfen/Issarthyl and or the Truedyl caused at least partially, this cataclysm by tampering with a strange artifact. Apparently they did this in a desperate attempt to fight the great humanoid invasion of King Loark.

It's also possible that at this time the Belcadiz who were in Glantri went, temporarily, to the Savage Coast, to return in Glantri at an unknown, later date.

This timeline has become clearer to me in later years, as I was able to talk to many more Hollow World elves than the few I met during my first voyage before the Wrath of the Immortals.

1500 BC The Aquarendi move into the waters of Minrothad, having learned of the existence of Verdier and Meditor in the area.

¶ Some ancient sources¹ could indicate that some Aquarendi already lived in the area since more ancient times, even before the Great Rain of Fire.

1420 BC Some Issarthyl become followers of the dark god Atzanteotl, and inspired by him discover the Hollow World. Other Shadowelves conquer the underground city of Aengmor² from the humans living there.

1300 BC The Great Humanoid Invasion of King Wogar reaches the Savage Coast and the Alhamil are almost exterminated, together with the humans in the area.

1290 BC Aengmor is surrounded by lava and the Shadowelves must abandon it. Many elves survive by burrowing deeper into the earth³.

1100 BC The four clans of the Shadowelves begin to worship the god Rafiel.

1000 BC The Alphetians come to Mystara, the empire of Nithia is powerful in Brun. Another Great Migration of Broken Lands humanoids and Nithian gnolls roams the Known World, in the Five Shires halfings are enslaved by orcs and the Truedyl are brought into the Hollow world by the Immortals. The Vyalia hide in their forest.

¹ The Hollow World boxed set migration map.

² Gaz 13 The Shadow elves on page 6 of the DM book has an image depicting Shadowelves killing Aztec-like humans. They could probably be the Intua created by John Calvin [here](#) on the Piazza Forums.

³ Supposedly these elves were the Schattenalfen.



The Rainbow Bridge

900 BC The Gellereth ally themselves closely with the humans in the region, which will lead to the founding of the elven and human nation of Wendar. The Geffronell instead, living further north, are often in conflict with the local humans and humanoids.

800 BC Besieged by hostile humans, the elves of the Sylvan Realm decide to leave, led by King Mealiden through the Rainbow Bridge. The Feadil refuse to abandon their homeland and stay. Erendyl, Grunalf, Chossum and Longrunner clans found Alfheim. The Callarii go to Traladara, the Shiye to Alphetia, where they create their own nation. In the following years Mealiden founds a new clan, the Mealidil (those who follow the way of the trees) from which a little later will originate another one, the Red Arrow (secret name)

700 BC The Alhamil elves are divided into western and eastern clans. The eastern elves create a new clan which is called Destreza¹ (shades of the stone). This clan mixes with humans and adopt a language similar to the human language of the region.

530 BC The Sheyallia, after a war against the humans of the region, flee from the Serpent peninsula and take refuge under the Plain of Fire.

500 BC Fall of Nithia.

150 BC The Belcadiz Elves (The powerful arms) settle in Glantri after a long migration that took them even briefly to Alfheim. They fled the Savage Coast after religious conflicts with the other elves of clan Destreza.

¶ Probably this was only the last Belcadiz migration, and a relevant part of the clan was already in Glantri for centuries.

0 AC First Emperor of Thyatis crowned. Some small groups of Shiye begin to settle in Norwold.

130 AC The Shadowelves discover the existence of Alfheim and request half of the elven nation. The Alfheim council refuses and diplomatic relations are broken.

560 AC The Shadowelves attack Alfheim but are defeated by the combined forces of Alfheim and Darokin. According to tradition, this is the first war between elven nations.

¹ This history mostly comes from Jennifer Guerra in [“History of Clan Alhambra”](#). See below for a description of the Alhamil and the Destreza.

600 AC Finally defeated by humans, the Feadil leave the Sylvan Realm and settle in Alfheim. A small group reaches the Sheyallia under the Plain of Fire. A few remain in the realm under the rule of humans. They will later adopt the name Yezachil² (lasting dwellings).

700 AC A part of the Erendyl clan moves to Glantri and adopts the name of Erewan³ (noble fruits).

900 AC After long wars against the humans the Geffronell are almost completely exterminated, the Gellereth of Wendar unable to save them.

1006 AC The Shadowelves conquer Alfheim and rename it Aengmor. Feadil, Chossum and Red Arrow clans go to Traladara, Erendyl, Grunalf, Mealidil and Longrunner clans to Wendar⁴.

1008 AC End of the War of the Wrath of the Immortals and Cataclysm in Alphatia.

1010 AC War in Glantri between Erewan and Belcadiz, due to the infiltration of Shadowelves among the Belcadiz. The war ends with the defeat of the Belcadiz⁵ (some of whom fled to Aengmor).

² I invented this clan of elves because ‘some elves’ are mentioned by Adrian Mathias in his [“Introduction to the Yezchamenid Empire”](#).

³ Date mentioned in Gaz5 The Elves of Alfheim.

⁴ See also [this thread](#) on The Piazza about the latest elven migration.

⁵ I think this event was completely my invention and doesn’t appear in canon or fanon.

THE ELVEN CLANS

I am nearly 500 years old, and I've spent most of my life traveling, since I left Alfheish, in the lands of Shiye Lawr, in Alphonatia. On these trips I studied all of the elven cultures and nations I met, scattered abroad by the great migration and the fall of the Sylvan Realm. I will start by talking about my clan, the elves of Alphonatia, the Shiye.

The list below is by no means exhaustive. Several more clans may exist of which I am not aware, and there are many minor clans¹ which are not covered in this list.

SHIYE The Alphonatian Elves originated from a clan who came to Alfheim with the others after escaping the Sylvan Realm. At the head of this clan was an elf wizard named Eyrindul, an elf who loved the creatures of the forest and did not approve of the religious dictates of the other clans. It was he who led the then Shiye to Alphonatia so that they could establish themselves in an enchanted forest impenetrable and unreachable by humanoids and far from humans. Over the centuries, however, the Shiye have always been loyal subjects of the Empire and have learned more tolerance than they had at the beginning. Eyrindul reached immortality, and since then he has been the protector of the nation. Although

Shiye Lawr has been the least affected by the war of all the nations of Alphonatia, it is also one of the nations in which the feelings of anger and revenge are stronger and more durable, and many young elves enlisted in the Imperial Army after the cataclysm, earning the reputation of fierce and tireless fighters. Shiye elves are always interested in magic and knowledge, and make use of magical powers to a greater extent than other elves. Their realm is closed to non-elves, unless they are people of proven trust and respectful of nature. Obviously the term does not include the fairy people, who instead are numerous and have always been among the Shiye. It is known throughout Alphonatia that those entering the realm uninvited will have to suffer an incessant series of jokes, often very scary, until they have decided to leave. Humans of neighboring Alphonatian nations consider the forest haunted and they do not set foot in it for any reason. Shiye Elves appear mysterious and proud when dealing with other races and are reluctant to trust outsiders. They also have a reputation for being masters of deception, and it is true that they have no qualms about using any means against their enemies. But this distrust toward outsiders is balanced by a great cohesion within the nation. There have been almost no crimes in Shiye Lawr in its 1,800 years of history, and the Shiye trust each other absolutely. Also, while they are ready to mock and make malicious jokes at the expense of outsiders, among themselves the Shiye love to laugh and feast, and their life is a series of games and parties, in which magic always has a great importance, as the attendance by members of the fairy people attests. However it often happens that the Shiye can be serious and melancholy, with the same emotional variability that also

¹ About the minor clans of Mystara, see also LoZompatore's compiled information in ["Trees of Life in Mystara"](#). More articles about elves may be found in [the Vault of Pandius](#). About Alfheim's minor clans, see also [this thread](#) on The Piazza.

affects members of the fairy people. The Shiye almost always have intense but non-lasting emotional relationships. The Shiye are commonly of tall stature, and have very pale skin and black, or even silver, hair. Their eye colors can be green, golden or purple.



The Shiye Dance

AKALIAN This clan of elves¹, whose name means "Noble Swan", live with members of the fairy people, in the dimension that is at the same time in Mystara and outside it. They are treated here because they often spend much time in our midst, among the Shiye, but they are also well-known by the elves of Alfheim. These Akalian elves are those who did not want to leave the protection of Ordana in 6000 BC and remained with the fairy people. The Akalian have pale skin and

¹ Created by Joaquin Menchaca, see his articles in the Vaults of Pandius: [“Akalian Class \(OD&D\)”](#) and [“Selenii Clan: An Interdimensional Elven Clan for Karamaikos”](#).

black hair, and their eyes are completely black, without pupil or iris. They are also called "Moon Elves" because they love the night more than the day, and are a very magical race. They do not trust non-elves and so very few of them have ever seen an Akalian. In emotional relationships they have all sorts of different behaviors. With strangers they are always serious and cautious, but members of the fairy people say that Akalians have with them great parties full of magic and merriment.

ALFHEIMER After leaving my country, following the irresistible impulse to travel that captures many Shiye, known to us as "The breath of the Wind", the first "foreign" elves I met were the elves of Alfheim. I remember the wonderful oak forest, so tall and bright, so different from our trees so mysterious and impenetrable, and it seems impossible to me that those oaks have disappeared, dead, and that Alfheim is no longer. But this is a report, and in it there is no place for stories of sadness and pain. The elves of Alfheim, even though they had, and still have, a very strong concept of nation, the nation which they consider the true and only home of the elven people, are divided into very different clans, which I will describe separately.

Before talking about the differences we must first emphasize what unites them, and what makes them one people despite the diversity of the clans. And what they have in common are two ancient kings, who later became immortals. The first is Ilsundal, who led the elves from Evergrun to the Sylvan Realm, and created the first Tree of Life, teaching the

elves peace, and reviving their love for the land that the years of evil human magic had suffocated. The second king is Mealiden, the founder of Alfheim, the one who saved the elves from genocide during the fall of the Sylvan Realm, allowing the elves to escape the encirclement of hostile humans thanks to the Rainbow Bridge, and kept their hope alive, carrying a branch of the Tree of Life. Together they manifest the ideals behind the nation of Alfheim: the love for the land and for peace, the union of all the elves, the courage to stand up for what you love. With these intentions Alfheim was born and lived, and although now it has been conquered and destroyed, thanks to these ideals the nation still lives through its people

ERENDYL This clan has been for centuries the clan of the King of Alfheim. It is a clan of artists, poets and craftsmen; the Erewn of Glantri originated from them. The Erendyl usually have a tolerant attitude toward other nations and other races, but they are also very traditional in their way of life, and disapprove of hunting, farming and herding. Compared to other elves they are much faster to finish a job, or to finish a song. They have very strong family ties between them and couples usually last a whole elven life, and possibly even beyond. They go to war in orderly and regular armies, and they prefer the open field to guerrilla tactics. They thoroughly enjoy beauty and games, but having precise models of how an elf should behave, even among themselves, they are more serious and less childish than many other elves. They are the elven "nobles" par excellence, or so they are considered. However, the consciousness of their value

has not made them particularly arrogant nor xenophobic, unlike other clans. The Erendyl are tall and blond and have blue or green eyes. Their skin is less pale than that of Shiye.

CHOSSUM It is the clan of merchants, the one which most appreciates other races and is more inclined to voyages and adventures. The Chossum would like more contact with other races and have always been opposed to closure and distrust. Many members of the clan have seen the loss of Alfheim as a "well-deserved punishment for our closure to the outside world" and are now much happier than other clans in Traladara, among humans. Despite this however, the Chossum fought for Alfheim and cried for Alfheim like any other clan. The Chossum seem to other elves "hasty like humans", appreciating the richness and novelties in magic and technology, all of which they tend to distribute to the entire clan. In fact, differently from humans, the Chossum are elves and have a very strong social solidarity. Compared with other elves they have a better knowledge of the world, and appear less "innocent" and provincial. Their emotional ties may be lasting or short, there is not a definite trend. Their love of diversity and change is perhaps what characterizes them most. The Chossum are not so tall, have hair from dark blond to brown and green or brown eyes. Their skin tans easily.

FEADIL When the Sylvan Realm was clearly lost and Mealiden had decided to take away the elves, the Feadil decided to stay. They stayed, pushed further and further into the

depths of the forest, for 1400 years. Finally, a human posing as a friend defeated them with treason. Almost all of the clan was exterminated, but the few survivors reunited with their brothers in Alfheim. As is easily understood by their history, the Feadil are virtually paranoid of other races, especially of humans. The only humans who they appreciate and accept are the druids, or others who have demonstrated a sincere love of nature. The Feadil are also a more religious, traditionalist and meditative clan, and appear to others elves as very serious and melancholic. They are incredibly courageous, explaining that nothing they can see and suffer is worse than the fall of the Sylvan Realm. Among them there are many adventurers, but they do not seek adventures and excitement in the world, but rather knowledge of their enemies. Their courage and professionalism make them surprising friends to the dwarves, and this friendship has been strengthened by the recent war, in which some Feadil and dwarves fought side by side against the Shadowelves. Among themselves, the Feadil have strong ties, and prefer to be left to die rather than lose those they love. Of all the clans of Alfheim, the Feadil is the one with the most extensive knowledge of the Tree of Life and clerical magic. The Feadil are tall and pale, have golden hair and very light blue or green eyes.

The **GRUNALF** are the clan that has stronger ties with nature. Their knowledge of trees, fruits and plants is impressive, and so many Grunalf are rangers. They accept the practice of hunting, as a sacred and important event, always choosing the old animals, and never the young. They have strong links with the

fairy people, and also with the creatures of the rivers and waters, and are therefore the best sailors and boat builders in Alfheim. They love to live in a simple way, as much as possible in contact with nature. They are serious only when they go hunting or fishing, while at all other times they love to play and joke. It is rare that they form lasting couples, instead they are normally tied in small closely united groups, the hunting bands, where promiscuity is normal. Such a thing was a bit shocking to me, because we Shiye have no lasting bonds but we do have one bond at a time. Towards the outside world and other races they have always maintained an attitude of indifference, but now that they are outside Alfheim they seem to consider the non-elves benevolently. The Grunalf are of low to medium height, they have tanned skin and brown eyes and hair.

LONG RUNNER The real name of the clan, in Elvish, is not revealed to those who are not part of it, nor are the real names of the elves of this clan. The reason is that this is the clan of magicians, where magic is widely used and appreciated (as among the Shiye). The Long Runner do not like humans or other races, and are wary even towards the elves that do not belong to their clan. However they often work with magicians of other clans and races without any problems, which suggests that more than being wary of non-elves they distrust non-magicians. Study is a very important thing for them, which they take very seriously, and they could seem staid and boring to many other elves. They love to dress elegantly, but with natural materials, and also love make-up and jewelry. Among them there are long-term or short

relationships, and also freedom of behavior, with no general rule. The reason why Long Runner and Shiye split is precisely the tendency of Shiye to take magic much less seriously, and the hatred of my people for formalism and seriousness. Yet even the Long Runner, under certain festive occasions, let themselves go and are ready to laugh and be joyous as all the other elves. Their parties are, of course, full of magic. The Long Runner are pale and tall, and often have green eyes and red hair.

MEALIDIL This clan was founded by Mealiden after the escape from the Sylvan Realm, and it considers itself the Alfheim clan par excellence. It is a traditionalist clan, with many scholars, clerics, historians and bards. The vastness of their libraries is famous among all of the elves, and these libraries were largely saved despite the disaster of war. The Mealidil are basically isolationists, but not particularly xenophobic towards other races. They love to dress in a studied manner that often appears to be dated back to several centuries before. They take very seriously all of their activities, but in the evening they drop a bit of their seriousness and become more cheerful and affable. Their marriages usually last a lifetime, but there are also different behaviors, fully accepted. The Mealidil are of average height, have red blond hair and blue and green eyes.

RED ARROW This clan also keeps its names secret, but it is not a clan of magicians, and is instead a clan of warriors. The clan is an offshoot of the clan Mealidil, detached just

before the elves arrived at Alfheim. The Red Arrow have always been defenders of the realm of elves, and consider the Shadowelf invasion a great dishonor. Yet no one can say that they have not done everything possible to fight against it. Now the Red Arrow study the techniques of war of the Shadowelves and plan their revenge. Obviously, their ability with weapons is the most important thing for the members of this clan, who are trained from childhood and go into battle with order and discipline, but are also capable of great mobility. They tend to dress in a simple and practical way. They do not trust the other races but particularly appreciate those who are worthy of honor and courage. To external eyes they appear rather gruff, but among themselves they are very simple and kind. In emotional ties they have unions similar to those of the Grunalf, although there are also cases of exclusive and lasting unions. The Red Arrow are not very tall but are robust, their skin is tanned, and their hair is brown red.

After talking about Alfheim I should speak of the Shadowelves, but I decided to leave them a moment aside because in my recent travels in the alphantian colony of the Hollow World¹ I have discovered that there are two different nations of the Shadowelves, very different from each other, one of which lives in the Hollow World. So firstly I will speak of the elves of the surface, and then, through the dark caves and darkest hearts of the elves of the dark, we will get to the Hollow World.

¹ Thirstestian here refers to the Alphantian Neatharum that could be reached through the Aegos elevator, see the Wrath of the Immortals boxed set.

The other elven nations that I had the opportunity to meet are the elves of Minrothad. Theirs is a trading nation, organized in guilds and inhabited by elves, humans, dwarves and halflings. The four races currently coexist quite peacefully, and still share the same philosophy: the pursuit of wealth. The Elves are exactly half of the population of Minrothad and are also the largest racial group. They are divided into two clans, however, very different from one another: the Meditor and the Verdier.

The **VERDIER** elves say that they are the original clan which settled in the area in 2200 BC, after leaving the Ilsundal migration. But around 1700 BC, according to the Thyatian calendar, a great cataclysm struck their land, separating it from the mainland and turning it into a series of islands. This did not change the life of the clan too much, although it led to an internal split that produced the Meditor clan. The Verdier inhabit the green island of Alfeisle, or at least live in its wooded interior. They are excellent rangers and have extensive natural and magical knowledge. Being part of a composite nation, however, they are too market-oriented, like the other races of Minrothad, and they export forest products and trade with other nations. This makes them quite tolerant and open, although some are wary of humans and hate werereatures, because of an epidemic of lycanthropy that struck Minrothad several centuries ago. The Verdier are not too different from the other elves, they love beauty and the forest, but they gave me the impression of being very similar to humans, perhaps because they are more "hasty" and

more interested in the wealth of other elven clans. However the social differences between them are minimal and not comparable to those found in human society. Amongst them the Verdier prefer stable and lasting relationships, but there are frequent exceptions. The Verdier have brown hair with almost green tones, green eyes and tanned skin. They are of medium height and slender.

MEDITOR These elves are a very particular clan made of sailors and navigators. After the cataclysm of 1700 BC, the elves found themselves surrounded by the sea, and some of them began to live in close symbiosis with the sea, giving rise to a new clan, the Meditor. These elves are interested in wealth and trade more than all the elves that I have ever met, and among the clan, although there is a certain degree of social solidarity, there are vast differences in wealth. They are also great lovers of adventure, ships and the sea, and many of them never move away from the coast by more than a half day's journey. They have a close relationship with the sea elves living right in the waters of Minrothad, and some of them also practice piracy on foreign ships. Among them long-term relationships are very rare, and short liaisons are very common, for example, shorter than among the Shiye. They dress in a flashy way, are very fond of festivities and tend to be more playful and cheerful than other elves. The Meditor have dark brown or black hair, very tanned skin, stocky build and blue eyes.



Meditors and Aquarendi

In the waters around Minrothad, along with other peoples such as the merrows and the tritons, also live the sea elves, the Aquarendi. Their existence is kept almost secret by the Meditor and the Verdier to protect the ancient sea elves from human interference.

AQUARENDI The sea elves are tall and willowy, have blue green hair and lighter skin of the same colors. Their history is very ancient and they retain it carefully. Born in the coastal waters of Evergrun, they went to live with the elves of the land during the period of splendor of the realm. But then, realizing the catastrophe that was coming, they returned to the sea. After the Great Rain of Fire they believed they were the only elves left in Mystara, until they discovered the existence

of the Meditor and the Verdier and moved to the waters around Minrothad. Now the sea elves have good relations with the elves of Minrothad and other sea creatures, and have virtually no relations with other races of the mainland, with only occasional visitors. As you can guess from the environment in which they live, the Aquarendi live practically naked, unless they have to fight. They love to play and joke with all creatures, and especially with dolphins, whales, turtles and seals. Often they wear ornaments of pearls and coral but otherwise they live very simply. They often have emotional ties that last a lifetime, but the young often have very short relationships and are also promiscuous. They can breathe air very well and are quite capable of walking on land, although they will hardly venture there except to meet their brothers the Meditor. Their society is still very different from that of the Meditor: the Aquarendi have no interest in wealth and are very united and have great solidarity with each other. They also have a very strong sense of religion. They love adventures, but feel nostalgic if they stay away from their homes too long. They have a very long life, which may last up to 5000 years and therefore are even more relaxed and less hasty than land elves. In the waters of Mystara it seems there are other groups of Aquarendi, in the waters of Davania and near Alphatia, but I know little or nothing about these other groups, even though it seems that they are not very different from the Aquarendi of Minrothad, only more isolationist than the ones in Davania and more open towards other races than the ones in Alphatia.

VYALIA This clan is divided into two groups, one who lives to the east, in Thyatis, and one in the west, in Traladara. Both groups are of tall stature, have silvery blond hair and eyes that seem silvery too. Both groups are very interested in poetry and magic, and appear distant, serious and mysterious. Both have strong mental discipline and a sense of great fellowship with nature and with "The Dream of the World" as they like to say. They also have an order of warriors which fights in a trance, and which nonetheless is truly lethal in battle. There are differences between the Eastern Group (Thyatian) and Western group (Traladaran): firstly the easterners have more dealings with the humans around them, and have also served in the Thyatian army when they believed in the cause for which they fought, whereas the westerners love peace, and never attack someone, if not to defend nature. Secondly the easterners tend to be more practical and open, while the westerners more isolationist and dreamers. Both favor the emotional relationships that last a lifetime, and have a strong sense of unity. Unlike other elves they remain focused on their work and devote to it all their energies, even if the westerners tend to be slower. The Vyalia settled in their territories in 2200 BC, after being separated from the Ilsundal migration like the Verdier. The separation between easterners and westerners instead took place just 1,000 years ago.

CALLARII This clan lives in Traladara, further west than the western Vyalia, and is very integrated with the local humans. The clan lived with the others in the Sylvan Realm, but they came south just after the creation of

Alfheim, following the dream of the priestess who was leading them. The Callarii are of tall stature, have pale skin, blond hair and light blue or, rarely, green eyes. They are a clan that loves horses and rivers, and so are excellent riders and navigators. They are a clan of warriors, and they form the elite unit of the army of Traladara. They have a strong sense of honor and only fight for just causes. The Callarii favor long-term relationships, but often young people have widened emotional bonds as the Grunalf of Alfheim.

After being in Traladara I went to the north, to visit the elven clans of Glantri, of Wendar and Norwold. I began in the powerful realm of magic.

EREWAN The clan, which now constitutes a principality in Glantri, was born 300 years ago from the Erendyl of Alfheim, making it the newest clan of the ones I know. They have fair skin, blond hair and green eyes. Their emotional relationships are often long lasting, but they also have short liaisons as the Shiye. They're obviously very interested in magic, and bitter enemies of the humanoids who live close to their borders. They desire to look very sophisticated and noble (even more so than the Erendyl!), and they love art. At the beginning they were part of the principality of Belcadiz, but since they hardly coexisted with them, they founded a new principality. They are defenders of nature to a level close to fanaticism, even though deep down they are less integrated with it than many other elves. They left Alfheim because they had more faith in magic

than in Immortals, but now that clerics can enter Glantri again the elven religions are spreading.

BELCADIZ These elves have olive skin, black hair and dark eyes. They are also shorter in stature than all the other elves I know. Their language is very similar to the human languages of the Savage Coast. In emotional relationships they tend to behave like humans, with jealousy, betrayal and duels of honor. In fact they are very passionate and proud and easily offended. They have a minimal relationship with nature, while they are very good in metallurgy. They love holidays, luxury and wealth, although they are still more supportive of each other than humans. They fled the Savage Coast to maintain their faith in the Goddess of Love, Valerias, but then they officially abandoned her while living in Glantri. Now that religions are spreading again, the Belcadiz are once again turning toward their former patroness Valerias, but also to Eyrindul (the lord of the Shiye). There are even rumors of infiltrations by Rafiel's followers, some of which were exiled to Aengmor in 1010 AC.

GELLERETH After Glantri I went to Wendar, known as Genalleth in elvish, where elves and humans coexist quite peacefully, even if the rulership of the nation is in the hands of the elves, who are the majority. The Elves of Wendar all belong to one clan, and are very adapted to the nature of their cold and snowy land. Their customs are actually quite similar to the humans in the area as they appreciate liquors, fighting and celebrate in

a very human way. Throughout their history they have often had to fight with the humans of Denagoth, the nation just north of Wendar. The Gellereth usually have lasting emotional relationships and give much importance to marriage, but there are cases of divorce. They have blond hair, that they often keep very long, pale skin and pale blue and gray eyes. They do not use a lot of magic even if they have many relationships with the fairy people. They worship a group of immortals who are called the Korrigans¹.

GEFFRONELL They lived in the area of the Denagoth, but a century ago were defeated and almost exterminated. Now some of them live in Wendar, while others have hidden in the forests of Geffron, initially to conduct a constant guerrilla warfare, but now only to wait for death in their homeland. They too revere the Korrigans and seem to have been the ones who taught their faith to the Gellereth. The Geffronell have very light blond hair, very pale skin and very light blue, green or gray eyes. They have a deep sense of belonging to nature and great courage in battle. Their unions are always exclusive and permanent. The few I have met seemed very serious and sad at the loss of their beloved forest.

¹ I elaborated a bit on the history of these Immortals in my article on New Blackmoor, 3050 BC, in Threshold issue #5. More information (and different theories) may also be found in [“The Korrigans”](#) and [“Wendar: A Mini Gazetteer”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius.

The **DUNESHIYE** The Shiye of the West are those who over the last thousand years, and especially in the last 500, moved from Alphatia to Norwold. Initially very closed to outsiders, they are now well integrated in the society of the country, where there are even some barons belonging to the elven race. The Duneshiye are tall, have brown hair and dark green or purple eyes. They are less interested in magic than the Alphatian Shiye, and they look a bit too human to us Shiye. They have many relations with the fairy people. Normally they have different emotional relationships throughout their lives, but they usually get married at some point. They have adapted very well to the cold natural environment of the northern lands, and compared to the Alphatian Shiye they have a much more favourable vision of the war. In fact, besides Eyrindul they also they worship the Norse Immortals, such as Wotan and Donar, and especially Frey and Freya, whose religions they took from the inhabitants of Norwold.

After meeting all the elven clans of the Known World I began traveling toward the Savage Coast, but during the trip I met another clan of elves, particularly surprising.

SHEYALLIA After their escape from the Serpent Peninsula very little was known of this clan, except that they could be hiding in the caves under the Great Plain of Fire, the vast desert that separates Sind from Hule. And just as I was travelling in this desert, a sandstorm separated me from the rest of the caravan, and made me fall into a hole in the

ground. I discovered a cave system where I met the Graakhalia. The Graakhalia are a nation of elves and gnolls ... elves and gnolls who live together and cooperate, as strange and incredible as this may seem. A Graakhalian told me how this strange partnership was created: when the Sheyallia arrived in the caves, they found them already inhabited by a clan of gnolls. Initially the two peoples fought or avoided each other, since a full-scale war was counterproductive for both, given the difficulties of survival in the caves. Over the course of a century, however, elves and gnolls learned that cooperation was the best thing for both. Now the two races live together as one people, although obviously they cannot marry and mix. After the fall of the Sylvan Realm there were problems when some Feadil arrived in the caves and fomented new racial hatred, but soon then most xenophobic elements were exiled and life returned to normal in Graakhalia. Now the two peoples live in friendship and everyone speaks the other's language. They share everything they own and they have common customs: both cremate the dead, elves and gnolls share in the rearing of youngsters from both races, and they use the names of the two languages equally. They also have a strict code of honor which requires tolerance of all races and of all individuals who are not immediately hostile. These elves still have characteristics similar to those of other elves, they never rush in their duties and they love to play and joke. These elves are usually monogamous and their relationships are durable. Having previously lived among black skinned Yavdlom men, the Sheyallia now have a bit of their blood. Most of them therefore have brown hair, brown eyes and tanned skin, despite their underground life.

DESTREZA The elves in the eastern area of the Savage Coast are similar to the Belcadiz of Glantri. They have olive skin and eyes and black hair. Like the Belcadiz, they are very proud and passionate and speak the language of the human baronies in which they live. (The area is called the Baronies of the Guardian, although the baronies are independent and do not respond to a single ruler). They too are talented in metallurgy, they love festivals and duels and have short and passionate relationships; otherwise, their attitudes vary from barony to barony. The Destreza of Torreon are great warriors, they love fighting and appreciate courage, and often are followers of Diulanna. Narvaez's elves are also warriors, worship Ixion or Vanya and many share the strong and rather intolerant religiosity of the barony. The Destreza of Gargoña, Almarrón and Saragón are more interested in magic, poetry, culture and beauty and follow Valerias or the elven Immortals. The Destreza of the city states of the Gulf of Hule, are dominated by Traladaran culture and have absorbed the human culture of the area, so they love adventures, trade, and are fascinated by magic, poetry and songs. All the Destreza elves who live by the sea are also excellent navigators, merchants and sometimes pirates. In combat they use this strange and dangerous invention that is called smokepowder, as the humans in the area also do.

ALHAMIL The Elves who live in the western half of the Savage Coast mainly inhabit four different countries. The Elves of Robrenn are of medium height, have blond hair and red eyes. Many of them are bards or druids,

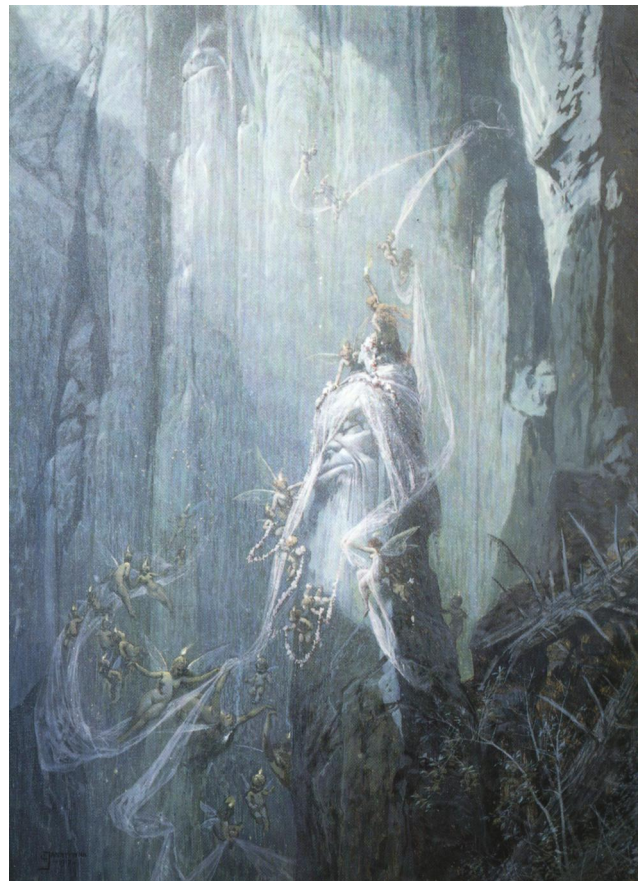
worship the Mother Goddess of nature and the elven Immortals. They are passionate and brave but they usually have long and stable emotional relationships. The Elves of Eusdria have dark blond hair and blue eyes, many of them are knights and paladins and share the ideals of nobility and courage predominant in the nation. They marry like humans and their unions are durable. The Elves of Bellayne, the nation of rakasta: the cat men, have blonde or brown hair and blue eyes, and appreciate courage and nobility. The Elves of Herath have blond hair and green eyes, believe in an egalitarian and tolerant society and are great magicians. All the Alhamil are very well integrated in human societies, but they keep their elven culture, and the Elvish language, much more than the Destreza. I also believe that the best elven bards of Mystara are the Alhamil. They love the sea and are often good mariners, but not as good as the Destreza.

YEZACHIL These elves live in a human nation of northern Brun called the Yezchamenid Empire. The empire took its name from the elven clan after defeating the human tribes that caused the fall of the Sylvan Realm. These humans have therefore always been friends of the elves. The Yezachil are the diehards who never left the Realm, and who several times risked total extermination. Being derived from the Feadil, they too are tall and pale, have blonde hair and blue eyes. As the Feadil they are very religious, but even if they worship the elven Immortals, their religion became integrated with that of the humans of the area, and is based on a benevolent Immortal of fire that opposes an evil Immortal of darkness, in a cosmic

conflict without end. Even their society is very similar to that of the humans, so that now the Yezachil are very tolerant, but also used to having to deal with bureaucracy and other stupid human inventions, something quite inconceivable for an elf! I have not personally visited the Yezachil, but from what I read and heard they marry with the same ceremony that humans use and their unions are durable. Given the religion they adopted, it seems they are also very experienced in pyromancy. They are also closely allied with the Pegataur (winged centaurs) living in the empire.

EARIEL This clan is the last clan of Brun known to me, and is also one of the most extraordinary and mysterious. The Eariel now call themselves the Ee'aar, a word that means something unknown to me in the language of the fairies of the air. During the Ilsundal migration, in 2300 BC, this clan was separated from the others and settled on the Arm of the Immortals. Here they met the fairies of the air, or rather it was the eponymous heroine of their nation, Aeryl, who met them. Aeryl lived long enough among the fairies to develop magnificent wings, and passed them on to his descendants, so that now all Ee'aar have wings. The clan lives in a realm surrounded by high mountains, friends of the great eagles and the Pegataurs who live among them. They have white wings, blond hair and blue eyes, and are tall and willowy. They do not trust strangers, and the only other nation they consider friendly is the kingdom of Eshu, inhabited by winged minotaurs (who apparently are the original race, while the common minotaurs are a degeneration). I

have not visited the kingdom of Aeryl, but from what I've found out it seems that they still revere the elven Immortals, and they are not very different from the other elves in character, although of course they are very close friends of the fairies of the air. They build tall and wonderful towers and they are very united and supportive of each others. In emotional relationships it seems they have several different companions when young, but then they settle for life with one mate.



Eariel

These are all the clans of Brun, which is currently the continent where almost all elves now live. I do not think that there are other clans on Brun of which I am unaware, but it is possible that there are particularly isolated groups, of which we know nothing. The continent is well known enough, but the central area, home of human and humanoid barbarians, is largely unexplored.

Before going any further it should be noted that no clan of elves dwell in Skothar, at the present state of our knowledge. The Meriallis obviously lived in Skothar, but elven scholars in general think they shared the fate of Blackmoor, as they have done throughout their history, and therefore none of them survived the Great Rain of Fire.

Regarding Davania, of which I will now tell, it was the original home of the elven people, and although now there seems that only a few clans are left, it is possible that in the continent live many other groups of elves that have not been heard from in millenia.

KYRTELLAR This group is the best known in Davania, since it left the other elves before the Ilsundal migration crossed the sea. They now live by the north-western coast of Davania, in constant conflict with a neighboring nation of goblins and are hated by all the humans in the region, which these elves use as slaves. I have no direct experience of this clan, and in all honesty I am not sure I want to, but it seems they are very good with magic (which by the way they also used to cause mutations in their human and goblin slaves) and are very proud and aggressive. They have brown hair and brown

eyes and in emotional relationships they seem to have many short relationships like the Shiye. In fact, this clan separated from the Shiye, which for us is certainly not a source of pride. Closed in their isolationist and tyrannical country, it seems that these elves are quite decadent. They justify their behavior with the idea that as the humans were the cause of the Great Rain of Fire, they should all be enslaved to prevent them from doing any further damage. Near to them there is also a former colony of dwarves, which obviously does not have friendly relations with the Kyrteellar (who now call themselves the Kwythellar).

THINYL This clan, as the Meriallis, seems to be completely extinct. The Thinyl are the only clan who remained in Davania, continuing to rely on Technomancy. Their fate is known because Alpathian wizards found the lost city of Thimhallan, apparently the last refuge of this clan. In the city they found the entire population dead and frozen, except for four elves who were closed in glass coffins. Alpathian wizards managed to wake them up, but subsequent incidents with Technomancy resulted in the deaths of the four elves, the last of the Thinyl. Now Thimhallan, which is the place where Serraine, the flying city of gnomes, originated, is the College of Technomancy of the Empire of Alpathia (although this news has not been made public outside the borders of the Empire). In the city there are currently living humans, dwarves and Shiye elves from Alpathia, and two of the three wizards who have rediscovered the city are leading the school. Since then however, much more information has been found on

other groups of elves still inhabiting Davania¹. It is hard to say at the moment if and how they are related to the ancient Thinyt.

N'DJATWA During his travels aboard the famous airship The Princess of Ark, Imperial Admiral Haldemar of Haaken met in the south of Davania, just north of Thimhallan, a society of ogre-elf crossbreeds. These beings, who call themselves N'djatwa, keep human slaves and sometimes eat them. From what I was told by the admiral, and from my knowledge of elven history, I would say that the elves had to be in the area long before the ogres. It seems that they were Thinyt who fled from the irreparable loss of their civilization. Forced to live in a terrible situation, they became wild and cruel. When a tribe of ogres arrived in the area they had no difficulty forming an alliance with them against humans and gnomes. Despite their customs they seem to have a strong and complex society, and the Empire of Alphatia has had some contact with this country (once it was established that they would not attempt to cook Alphatians).

As shown by my descriptions above, it seems that but a few elves live in Davania in modern times, and those are degenerates. I have some vague indication that there may be elves in the human matriarchy of Pelatan. The area was elven before the cataclysm, and it may be that there are still some elves or that the human population has elven blood. But too little is known of the distant nation to give an answer right now.

¹ See Threshold issue #5 for more information.

¶ In the last year new information has led me to revise the above position. It seems that many groups of elves still survive in Davania, and some uncertain reports from Thimhallan seems to suggest that even the ancient Evergrun still exists!²

The following paragraphs about the Shadowelves and the elves of the Hollow World were written years ago, when I had the chance to reach that hidden land through the world elevator in Aegos. Now that I live in the Hollow World I have come to know the below clans even better but, even if I came to understand their history much better, I have nothing to add to these descriptions.

SHADOWELVES (the four lost clans) The Shadowelves live in a vast system of underground caves below Alfheim, Darokin and the Broken Lands. Forced to take refuge in the darkness after the Great Rain of Fire, and then again by the Cataclysm of 1700 BC, they come out of their subterranean realm in recent years and conquered Alfheim. They have pale grayish skin, in different shades, white hair and black eyes, and are not very tall. I was able to talk to an Alfheim elf who, several years ago, had managed to infiltrate them as a spy, obviously camouflaged, and he told me about their society. They worship an Immortal named Rafiel, who for them is very important. The religious precepts of Rafiel are law for them, and the Shamans of Rafiel (of which 55% are women) are very powerful in their society. The Shamans worship crystals, which according to tradition contain the souls of the dead, and they do it with powerful magic. According to the Shamans, souls go to the crystals waiting to reincarnate. Religious ceremonies are

² *ibid.*

taken very seriously, but are also a bit sad. The dark elves usually marry for love, and often it is the women who decide. If a spouse dies the other normally remarries. The descent is matrilineal (the children belong to the clan of the mother). Usually they marry with a person who is not of their clan, and this has softened over the centuries the differences between clans, although each clan has its own city. Celebryl is the clan of the government and of the warriors, the Porador the clan of agriculture, the Felestyr the clan of miners and clerics (both have to do with crystals) and the Gelbalf clan of silk, spiders and magic. The Shadowelves have a fairly rigid society, which appreciates work and commitment and despises waste and errors. The lighthearted nature so predominant among surface elves in them manifests itself only during the rare evening festivities. Their dances and their music are very beautiful, but also quite sorrowful. The elves who are more than 800 years old are exiled, and imperfect children are abandoned (Shadowelves are more prolific than surface elves, but often their children have malformations, due to the cataclysm of 1700 BC). They say "Rafiel will lead them", but I think the best place Rafiel can guide them is toward a quick death.

SCHATTENALFEN After hearing about the Shadowelves and after learning what they had done to Alfheim, I thought they inhabited the deepest moral abyss in which elves could go down, deeper than the one reached by the Kirtellar. But I was wrong. During my travels in the Hollow World I met three clans of elves, and one of these clans is more dark and cruel than the worst of the Shadowelves from the Outside World could ever be. Now they call themselves

Schattenalfen, which in their degenerated language means "Elves of darkness" but I know who they once were. They were the Issarthyl, the clan who lived in the area of Glantri and was driven underground by the Cataclysm of 1700 BC. They were a noble people, but during their stay in the dark, desperate and close to death, have been corrupted by the teachings of a dark Immortal, Atzanteotl, which once was one of them. I managed to infiltrate their caves at the risk of my life, and I observed them closely. They also abandon their deformed children (they do have more than the Shadowelves) and exile their elders. They too have a matrilineal descent, but among them the women are more often warriors or mages than clerics. Their religion is not as strong as that of Rafiel among the Shadowelves, but much more despotic. They preach their right to dominate every other race and seek revenge against the races of the surface. They have few clerics and a few wizards, and an architecture similar to that of a human nation of the Hollow World, the Azca, and very different from that of the Shadowelves. They do not give special meaning to crystals. They have a very hierarchical society, and where the Shadowelves cooperate willingly as other elves do, the Schattenalfen give and suffer commands as the humans. Yet I must recognize they have a certain social solidarity, and their society is not competitive: they are too busy hating all other races to hate each other. They love war and massacres, and their parties are decadent, with liquor and excesses. They marry, and their marriages are lasting, but are not particularly faithful. Yet such behavior is accepted and considered normal. The only honorable custom they have is the right of adoption: any elf who applies to be

adopted by them, whatever his or her clan is, will be accepted in their society. However he or she will have to marry a Schattenalfen (even if he or she is already married) and will be constantly monitored. In any case, only recently have they had contacts with Shadowelves, and they do not know other clans of elves. The Schattenalfen are of small stature (5.25 feet or less), have pale white skin, white or steel gray hair, blue-gray or, rarely yellow, eyes. They suffer much sunlight to the skin and the eyes, and even though their caves are often lit, they live for most of the time in total darkness (while the Shadowelves normally illuminate every corner with fire or magic).

I want to add a little note, for the humans who will read this report, about the matriarchal customs of the Shadowelves. It might seem that among them women are more important than they are among surface elves, but this is not true. Simply the other societies of surface elves do not need laws to codify basic rules of social coexistence that all normally respect. Therefore they have no laws on matrilineal descent because every elf can choose freely between the clan of the father and the mother without a law to tell him which one to choose, and the assets of the family are distributed more equally. There are clans in which women participate more or less in politics or other fields of activity, but in all societies elven males and females have the same rights and are considered equal, unlike what often happens among the humans. So what you humans might call a "matriarchy" is simply equality between males and females, something that the Shadowelves have encoded within the

law and the surface elves practice without a need to codify, but an essential trait of the Elven society in both.

TRUEDYL (The Gentle Folk) This clan settled in Glantri several centuries ago, but was driven out by the Cataclysm of 1700 BC and moved into the land which is now the Five Shires, the land of halfings. When the great humanoid invasion reached the area, the Truedyl would have certainly been wiped out, but somehow they managed to escape into the Hollow World and save themselves; and here I have met with them. These elves have a complex culture, closely connected to their history. They blame themselves for the cataclysm of 1700 BC, which was caused by a strange artifact they found buried underground. This incident made them feel guilty for a long time, and took away all their joy in life. So they have become very philosophical and fatalistic, and many of them live in a kind of resigned sadness. They love to discuss philosophy and history, and their poems and their music are so beautiful that I was deeply impressed. No other clan of elves, maybe not even the Alhamil or the Erendyl, have so beautiful a poetry. Yet their poetry is always sad and melancholy. They do not care about anything material, or clothes or food or housing. Often they run naked and barefoot because they do not bother to get dressed, eat the fruits of the forest without food preparation, and occasionally sleep in shelters or on beds of leaves and flowers. They live in a beautiful and charming forest, where no animal ever hurts them and the weather is always nice and warm. The trees are full of fruits and so the Truedyl do not have to do any hard work for

a living. But despite this, their resigned sadness seems to follow them everywhere. They are unable to feel enthusiasm and are not capable of desire and will. The maximum happiness they can reach is a gentle contentment. They are always calm and quiet, and do not use violence under any circumstances, not even to defend themselves. A goblin could get into their forest, killing them one by one and not encounter any opposition. Yet the Immortals protect them, and the humans who live close to them consider them sacred and defend them from outside intrusion. If someone gets hurt in their forest they treat him and feed him, but it seems that this does not cause them any emotion or excitement. Often they eat the fruit of a tree growing in the forest, which makes them live in a dreamy state for days. Despite all this, recently, as I learned by living with them, things are beginning to change. Many young people who have had contact with the fairy folk, with humans or with Alphatians and are starting to question the system of clan life. This causes a lot of discussion, but still calm discussions. Young elves, for the first time in a long time, want to live in a less subdued state, and even if they do not put in discussion the absolute pacifism of the Truedyl, they are learning to feel happiness and joy and seek fun and games. The change will probably be a long process, but I think it will do well for the Truedyl and allow them to live the life they have at hand, a beautiful life in a beautiful and charming forest, as was the life of all the elves in ancient times, before technomancy and the Great Rain of Fire, and the destruction of Evergrun. The Truedyl are of moderately tall stature, have fair skin with a golden hue, golden hair and green and light purple eyes.

WYRDIL These elves live in the cold mountains of the north of the Hollow world. They too lived in Glantri before the cataclysm of 1700 BC, and fled for their lives under the ground down to the Hollow World. These elves often live in caves dug into the rock against the cold, but spend a lot of time outdoors. They are excellent hunters and brave warriors, and are often dressed in heavy fur. They love parties and banquets, with a slightly un-elfen love for very strong spirits, and spend much time in friendly matches on the snow. They follow the Norse Immortals, Frey and Freya in particular, and their religiosity tends to be very practical and lived with joy and lightness. Male children are educated by the father and the daughters by their mother. Males usually excel in the use of the spear and women in archery, so women usually hunt, with males having only a supporting function. They are very strong-willed but like to joke, often at the expense of foreigners, with whom, however, they are also very hospitable, if the visitor accepts their jokes without taking offense. Among them it happens that children are born with deformities, and usually these children are killed. They consider this a hard necessity so as to prevent the spreading of the mutations of the cataclysm. Now there are many who oppose this practice, however, and defy it openly, and no one dares to attack them for this, so maybe it will eventually disappear. Although they are always cheerful, the Wirdyl are a tough and hardened clan, which is not afraid of any difficulties. They are very robust for elves, and rather tall of stature. They are pale and have blond or red hair and blue or green eyes. They often live with only one companion but in their youth they often have more mates, even more than one at a time.

And so ends my brief description of the elves of Mystara. I am not sure, of course, that I have really described all the clans of our world, but I've told everything I know about the clans that I have encountered in my long journeys. If I have more news I will send, as soon as possible, new annotations to the Imperial University.

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(All below chronologies may differ from mine in several dates and details)

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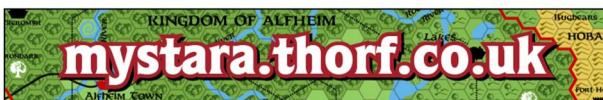
[Elves post the Great Rain of Fire](#),

by John Calvin



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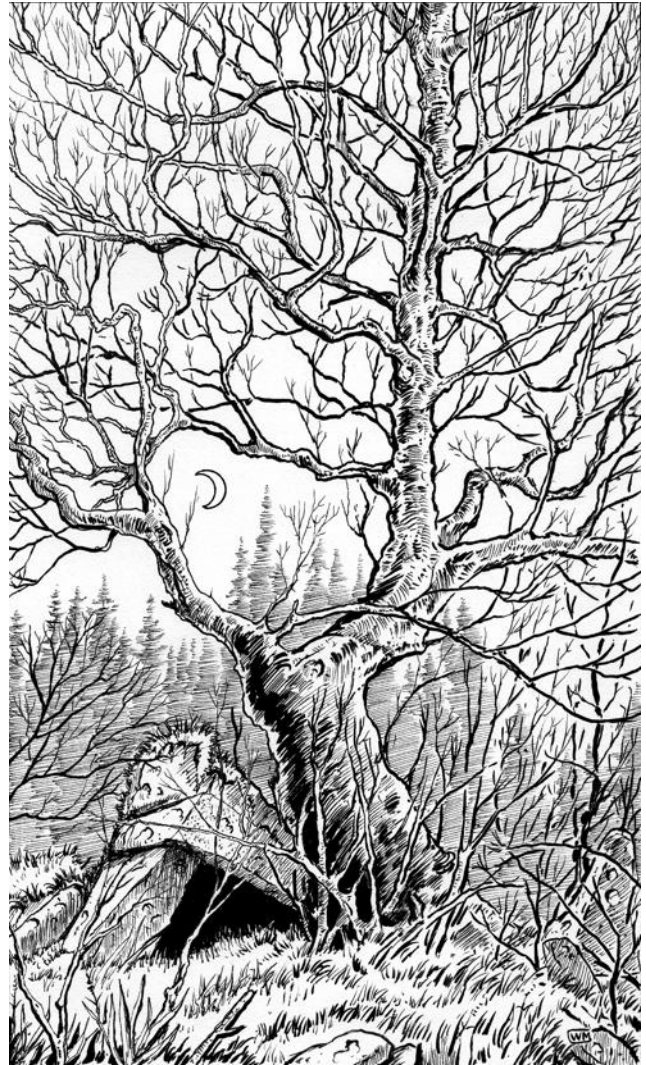
Elves of Mystara

Elf Class Variants and Sub-Classes for BECMI/Rules Cyclopedia D&D

by Craig Antoun (Iron Drake)

INTRODUCTION

In the earliest editions of the Dungeons & Dragons Role-Playing Game, the races of dwarves, elves, and halflings were treated as individual character classes, limited to one option based upon their race. Thus, dwarves and halflings held a similar function as fighters, while elves held a role as dual-classed fighters and magic-users. Human player characters, on the other hand, were able to choose from amongst four class professions: cleric, fighter, magic-user, or



thief. This simplified character class system worked well overall, but the race as class feature often left many players desiring more options for their demi-human characters.

Over the years, official D&D sourcebooks for the Mystara campaign setting have introduced a few variations on the standard demi-human classes, including the elf wizard¹, dwarf cleric², halfling master³, and

¹ Introduced in GAZ5 The Elves Of Alfheim.

² Introduced in GAZ6 The Dwarves Of Rockhome.

even the shadow elf shaman¹. Using these official class variants as design templates, I have created additional class options for demi-human characters, expanding the race as class feature of the game.

This article explores elven class variants within the game mechanics presented in the Dungeons & Dragons Rules Cyclopedia². These class variants can easily be adapted for use with B/X D&D³, Labyrinth Lord, and Dark Dungeons rule sets. Additionally, this article also takes a look at elven sub-classes presented in previous canon and fanon works.

THE ELVES OF MYSTARA

Of all Mystara's demi-human races, the elven race is by far the most versatile with regard to adventuring classes. While not as prevalent in elven clans as traditional fighter/magic-users, elven clerics, druids, magic-users, thieves, and warriors do exist. In addition, the standard elf class may, at higher levels, transition into several sub-classes, including the avenger, druidic knight, knight, paladin, and wizard.

³ Introduced in GAZ8 The Five Shires.

¹ Introduced in GAZ13 The Shadow Elves.

² The Dungeons & Dragons Rules Cyclopedia is a compilation of the D&D Basic, Expert, Companion, and Master rule sets by Frank Mentzer; edited into one volume by Aaron Allston.

³ B/X D&D refers to the 1981 D&D Basic rulebook by Tom Moldvay and the 1981 D&D Expert rulebook by David Cook and Steve Marsh.

Elven Racial Abilities

As detailed in the D&D Rules Cyclopedia, all elves have the following racial abilities: infravision 60'; enhanced secret and hidden door detection; immunity to ghoul paralysis; and an ability to understand and speak several additional languages— elf, orc, gnoll, and hobgoblin. Upon reaching 1,600,000 experience points, elves gain a resistance to breath weapons, automatically taking half damage from all breath attacks; which a successful saving throw reduces to one-quarter damage. Elves also have an average lifespan of 800 years.

Martial Training

Within elven culture, martial arts are so valued, every child is taught from a young age the ways of the warrior. Training encompasses a wide range of weaponry during the first several decades of an elf's young life, granting them a general knowledge of all weapons.

Innate Magical Ability

Elves have innate magical ability, allowing them to cast spells unhindered while wearing armor. Combined with their formative martial training, the majority of elves tend toward the fighter/magic-user class. There are elves, however, choosing to overlook their racial affinity with magic, electing instead to pursue other professions, such as cleric, druid, thief, and warrior.

Level Limitations

Elves, regardless of their class, are limited in advancement to 10th level. This limitation is balanced by their special racial abilities, extraordinary saving throws, superior fighting skills, and basic weapon mastery in all weapons not restricted by class.

Although elves are limited to 10th level in their chosen class profession, they may continue to improve in combat ability by training with humans. These increased combat skills are represented in attack ranks which are achieved as the elf continues to earn experience points.

Nonetheless, a select few elven classes are able to progress beyond the 10th level, but in spellcasting ability only. These additional levels are known as “magic” levels, and only the elf magic-user and elf wizard classes are capable of this accomplishment.

D&D Rules Cyclopedia Errata

The following errata¹ pertains to the elf class presented in the Dungeons & Dragons Rules Cyclopedia.

Hit Dice:

Boxed text in the Rules Cyclopedia, Page 25, indicates an elf gains +1 hit point at 10th level. This is incorrect, and should read an elf gains +2 hit points at 10th level, as indicated in both the D&D Expert and Companion rule sets.

Detection:

Accidentally omitted from the Rules Cyclopedia, Page 25, an elven character can detect secret and hidden doors on a roll of a 1-2 on a d6. This ability is explained on Page 147.

Elf Spell Progression:

The elven spell progression chart in the Rules Cyclopedia, Page 26, was erroneously copied from the magic-user class located on Page 19. The correct spell progression is detailed on Table 1, and is also found in both the D&D Expert and Master rule sets.

Table 1 – Elf Spell Chart

Elf Level	Spells / Level				
	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	-	-	-	-
2	2	-	-	-	-
3	2	1	-	-	-
4	2	2	-	-	-
5	2	2	1	-	-
6	3	2	2	-	-
7	3	3	2	1	-
8	4	3	2	2	-
9	4	4	3	2	-
10	5	4	3	2	1

¹ Errata provided from [“D&D Rules Cyclopedia Errata and Companion Document”](#) by Aaron Oliver.

Elf Cleric



Elves who follow this holy path are religious crusaders for their Immortal patron, using their clerical teachings to tend to the spiritual needs of their elven brethren while employing their martial ability to combat physical threats to those under their Immortal's protection.

Though customarily honoring elven Immortals, worshiping non-elven patrons is not unheard of, especially within elven communities bereft of a Tree of Life.

It should be noted that elven clerics of the Immortal Ilsundal, though treated with equal reverence, do not perform the same function or ceremonies within the clan as Treekeepers, nor are they able to harness elven magic granted to the Treekeepers by Ilsundal.

Elven clerics are commonly found within the Alphonatian Empire, Confederated Kingdom of Robrenn, Kingdoms of Ghyr and Wendar, Norwold, the Northern Wildlands, and kingdoms of the Western Alliance. While rare within the nations of the Known World, elven clerics can originate in these countries as well.

Elf Cleric Class Details

Prime Requisite: Wisdom.

Other Requirements: Intelligence score of 9 or more.

Experience Bonus: 5% for Wisdom 13-15, 10% for Wisdom 16-18.

Hit Dice: 1d6 per level up to 9th level. At 10th level +2 hit points, and Constitution adjustment no longer applies.

Maximum Level: 10th

Saving Throws: As Elf of equivalent level.

THACO: As Cleric of equivalent level.

Alignment: Any.

Armor: Any. Shield permitted.

Weapons: No edged or pointed weapons, unless permitted by Immortal patron; all others permitted.

Special Abilities: Clerical spells; Turning Undead; at 1,600,000 XP take half damage from breath weapons; infravision; extra languages (elf, gnoll, hobgoblin, orc); 1 in 3 chance to detect secret and hidden doors; immunity to ghoul paralysis.

Weapon Mastery: Basic mastery in all weapons not restricted to clerics. Gain additional weapon choices as a standard elf.

Skills: Required to take Ceremony, Tracking, and Treewalking at 1st level.

Special Abilities

Turning Undead:

Elven clerics function as regular human clerics with regards to turning undead, and turn undead as a cleric of equivalent level.

Clerical Spells:

Starting at 2nd level, the elf cleric can memorize and cast clerical spells.

Higher Experience Levels

When an elf cleric reaches *Name* level (9th), he is called a patriarch (if male) or matriarch (if female).

Further Advancement:

After reaching maximum level (10th), elf clerics may continue to improve their combat ability with attack ranks, although their ability to cast clerical spells and turn undead cease to progress beyond this point. (See **Table 4** in the Appendix to this article for details of XP progression)



ELF DRUID



For elves who desire the company of the trees more than the friendship of their companions, the path of the druid¹ beckons. Due to their incredible warrior skills coupled with their affinity for nature, elves make exceptional druids.

Elven druids function in the same manner as a normal human druid, and gain all of the same special abilities of the class².

Druids of elven origins may be found anywhere in Mystara, but are particularly prevalent in Alfheim, the Kingdom of Eusdria, and the Confederated Kingdom of Robrenn.

¹ The original version of the elf druid was first introduced by Bruce Heard in Dragon Magazine Issue # 178 (February 1992).

² Several new special abilities of the druid class were detailed by Bruce Heard in Dragon Magazine Issue # 177 (January 1992).

Elf Druid Class Details

Prime Requisites: Wisdom.

Other Requirements: Intelligence score of 9 or more.

Experience Bonus: 5% for Wisdom 13-15, 10% for Wisdom 16-18

Hit Dice: 1d6 per level up to 9th level. At 10th level +2 hit points, and Constitution adjustment no longer applies.

Maximum Level: 10th

Saving Throws: As Elf of equivalent level.

THACO: As Cleric of equivalent level.

Alignment: Neutral.

Armor: Leather armor, scale mail if constructed from natural materials. Shield permitted if made only of wood and leather.

Weapons: Blowgun, club, dagger, hand axe, mace, spear, staff, war hammer, and sling. Weapons must be made with no metal.

Special Abilities: Clerical and druidic spells; at 6th level gain *speak with animals* ability; at 10th level becomes immune to poison; at 1,400,000 XP may use cauldron as a *crystal ball*; at 1,600,000 XP take half damage from breath weapons; at 2,500,000 XP gain *shapechange* ability; infravision; extra languages (elf, gnoll, hobgoblin, orc); 1 in 3 chance to detect secret and hidden doors; immunity to ghoul paralysis.

Weapon Mastery: Basic mastery in all weapons not restricted to druids. Gain additional weapon choices as a standard elf.

Skills: Required to take Ceremony, Nature Lore, Tracking, and Treewalking at 1st level. Next available skill choices should include Healing, Snare, and Survival.

Special Abilities

Druidic Spells:

Starting at the 2nd level of experience, the elf druid can memorize and cast both clerical and druidic spells.

Elven druids can cast any spells that clerics can except for those which affect good or evil (*protection from evil* or *dispel evil*, for example).

Druids also gain access to the following magic-user and elf spells (although they are treated as normal druid spells)¹.

1st level – *precipitation* (from GAZ5 The Elves of Alfheim)
watcher (from GAZ5 The Elves of Alfheim)

2nd level – *entangle*

3rd level – *clairvoyance* (animals only)

4th level – *growth of plants*
hallucinatory terrain (outdoors)

5th level – *charm plant* (7th level M-U spell)
transmute rock to mud (GAZ5 The Elves of Alfheim)

Speak with Animals:

At 6th level the elf druid gains the ability to *speaking with animals*² as the mystic ability. The druid may speak with any normal or

¹ Druidic spell selection comes from [“D&D Rules Cyclopedia Errata and Companion Document”](#) by Aaron Oliver.

² The *speaking with animals* ability comes from [“D&D Rules Cyclopedia Errata and Companion Document”](#) by Aaron Oliver.

giant animal as often as desired; animals understand the speech and she understands theirs, though no animal is forced to talk to her.

Immune to Poison:

Upon reaching 10th level the elf druid becomes immune to all forms of natural poison.

Cauldron Scrying:

At 1,400,000 XP (attack rank F) the elf druid can use her cauldron as a *crystal ball*.

Shapechange:

When reaching the Circle of Nine at 2,500,000 XP (attack rank K), an elf druid can create a magical torc used by that druid alone. It allows the elf druid to shapechange into any non-magical woodland animal. The elf druid can do this at will, back and forth, any reasonable amount of equipment appearing with the elf druid when regaining her normal shape.

Higher Experience Levels

Elf druids at *Name* (9th) level or above receive the title of druid, whether male or female.

Druidic Homes:

At 9th level or higher an elf druid may build a special home deep in the forest she protects. This druidic home¹ must pleasingly blend with its surroundings, usually a natural site

¹ The druidic home is identical to elven strongholds as per the Rules Cyclopedia. It is suggested as an option for human druids in [“D&D Rules Cyclopedia Errata and Companion Document”](#) by Aaron Oliver.

of great beauty. Typical locations are within great tree hollows, on the edges of quiet vales, or behind rushing waterfalls.

Once the druidic home is completed, the elf druid will develop a friendship with the animals of the forests (birds, rabbits, squirrels, foxes, bears, etc.). All normal animals within five miles of the druidic home will be friendly toward the druid dwelling there. Animals will be able to warn of approaching strangers, carry news of events, deliver short messages to nearby places, etc. In return for these services, the animals will expect the elf druid to help and protect them from unnatural dangers.

Further Advancement:

Upon achieving 10th level, the elf druid has reached her maximum spellcasting ability. However, her combat abilities will continue to improve past 10th level with attack ranks, making her a powerful druidic warrior.

The Circle of Nine:

Per region there are only nine druids of 30th level (usually referred to as the Circle of Nine²), seven of 31st level, five of 32nd level, four of 33rd level, three of 34th level, two of 35th level, and one of 36th level (the Great Druid). An elf druid who reaches 2,500,000 XP (attack rank K) is the equivalent to a 30th level human druid, making her eligible to join the Circle of Nine.

Unless there is a vacant spot among the Circle of Nine (at 30th level or above), the druids eligible to fill that position must compete with each other to advance in

² The Circle of Nine were detailed by Bruce Heard in Dragon Magazine Issue # 177 (January 1992).

levels. The druids do so by inventing new druidic spells or potions, or furthering the druidic cause during quests, by returning a long-lost relic to the grove, etc. All the druids from the Circle of Nine and above (except the petitioners) vote for the best achievement during a special gathering in the forest.

Alternatively, a druid of 30th level may challenge one of the nine 30th level druids; they will only fight with magic and unarmed combat, as weapons are not allowed. If the challenging druid loses, she is reduced to 29th level, or in the case of an elf druid, she is reduced to attack rank J, losing enough experience points that she is 1 experience point short of 30th level (or again, in the case of the elf druid, attack rank K). Once she's regained 30th level, she may try again, but cannot issue another challenge until three months have passed since her first challenge.

For each 100,000 XP gained after attack rank K, the elf druid is considered one level higher for the purpose of determining the human druid equivalent. Thus, an elf druid who attains a total of 3,100,000 XP is equal to a 36th level human druid (the Great Druid). (See **Table 4** in the Appendix to this article for details of XP progression)

ELF MAGIC-USER



Elf magic-users are elves who focus solely on their magical studies in order to progress their magical spellcasting ability beyond that of a normal elf. Due to their long life spans, elf magic-users, like all elves, receive martial training, but theirs is limited to the choice weapons of the magic-user.

As elves are not hindered in their spellcasting by the wearing of armor, elven magic-users may, if they wish, don armor and wield a shield to protect themselves.

Elven magic-users may be found anywhere, but are very common in the Alphetian Empire, the Principalities of Glantri, the Kingdoms of Ghyr and Wendar, the Northern Wildlands, and the kingdoms of the Western Alliance.

Elf Magic-User Class Details

Prime Requisite: Intelligence.

Other Requirements: Intelligence score of 9 or more.

Experience Bonus: 5% for Intelligence 13-15, 10% for Intelligence 16-18.

Hit Dice: 1d4 per level up to 9th level. At 10th level +2 hit points, and Constitution adjustment no longer applies.

Maximum Level: 10th

Saving Throws: As Elf of equivalent level.

THACO: As Thief of equivalent level.

Alignment: Any.

Armor: All; shields permitted.

Weapons: Blowgun, dagger, net, sling, staff, and whip.

Special Abilities: Magical spells; at 1,600,000 XP take half damage from breath weapons; infravision; extra languages (elf, gnoll, hobgoblin, orc); 1 in 3 chance to detect secret and hidden doors; immunity to ghoull paralysis.

Weapon Mastery: Basic mastery in all weapons not restricted to magic-users. Gain additional weapon choices as a standard elf.

Skills: Tracking and Treewalking required at 1st level.

Higher Experience Levels

At *Name* (9th) level, an elf magic-user is called a wizard (if male) or maga (if female). Also at *Name* level, an elf magic-user may create magical items.

Further Advancement:

Upon reaching 10th level, the elf magic-user's combat abilities (which are equivalent to a thief of equal level) stagnate and will no longer advance as he concentrates fully on progressing his spellcasting beyond his maximum level limit. This feat is possible due to the strong affinity with magic possessed by all members of the elven race. Experience points earned past the 10th level are applied to gaining magical spellcasting levels only. Thus, while the elf magic-user's magical spellcasting ability increases with each new 'level,' his fighting ability is frozen at 10th level and will never increase.

Increased Spell Damage:

As an elf magic-user gains magic levels past the 10th level, the amount of damage inflicted by damage-causing spells increases as well, just as it does for a normal human magic-user. For example, an elf magic-user of magic level 16 can inflict 16d6 damage with a *fireball* spell.

Magic Item Creation:

An elf magic-user who attains 9th level may create magical items, just as a normal human magic-user can. When attempting to create magic items, the elf magic-user uses his magic level instead of his regular elf level when calculating the success chance.

(See **Table 5** in the Appendix to this article for details of XP progression)

Special Abilities

Magical Spells:

Elf magic-users use magical spells just as human magic-users do, and can achieve a greater level of mastery with them than a normal elf. The elf magic-user chooses his spells from the same spell list available to human magic-users, and does not have access to the elven magical spells taught by the Immortal Ilsundal's Treekeepers.

ELF THIEF



While elf thieves are not unknown among their kind, few elves turn to this path, so these unusual individuals are few and far between. In large human cities elven thieves find that their burglary skills and quick wits allow them to survive and pull in a profit in trades that are less than respectable.

An elf's infravision, long life span, and keen skill as a warrior provide them with an extraordinary edge in the profession of thief.

Although elven thieves can be found most anywhere, they are very rare in elven communities, and more likely to inhabit regions with large human populations, such as the Empire of Thyatis, the Republic of Darokin, and Alphonat.

Elf Thief Class Details

Prime Requisite: Dexterity.

Other Requirements: Intelligence score of 9 or more.

Experience Bonus: 5% for Dexterity 13-15, 10% for Dexterity 16-18

Hit Dice: 1d6 per level up to 9th level. At 10th level +2 hit points, and Constitution adjustment no longer applies.

Maximum Level: 10th

Saving Throws: As Elf of equivalent level.

THACO: As Thief of equivalent level.

Alignment: Any.

Armor: Leather armor only; shield not permitted.

Weapons: Any missile weapon; any one-handed melee weapon.

Special Abilities: At 1st level Open Locks, Find Traps, Remove Traps, Climb Walls, Move Silently, Hide In Shadows, Pick Pockets, Hear Noise, and Backstab; at 2nd level can cast magic-user spells from scrolls; at 4th level Read Languages 80%; at 8th level Sniping: at 1,600,000 XP take half damage from breath weapons; infravision; extra languages (elf, gnoll, hobgoblin, orc); 1 in 3 chance to detect secret and hidden doors; immunity to ghoul paralysis.

Weapon Mastery: Basic mastery in all weapons not restricted to thieves. Gain additional weapon choices as a standard elf.

Skills: Tracking and Treewalking required.

Special Abilities

Thief Abilities:

Like a human thief, elven thieves have several special abilities collectively called thief abilities¹. Due to their elven heritage, elf thieves apply racial adjustments to all thieving abilities as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2 – Elf Thief Racial Adjustments

Thief Ability	Adj.
Open Locks	-5%
Find Traps	+0%
Remove Traps	+0%
Climb Walls	0%
Move Silently	5%
Hide In Shadows	+10%
Pick Pockets	+5%
Hear Noise	+5%

Note: These racial adjustments have already been factored into the thief ability percentile scores found on Table 6 – Elf Thief Experience Table in the Appendix.

Backstabbing:

If an elf thief can sneak up on a victim, completely unnoticed, the elf thief may backstab – if she is using a one-handed melee weapon, she may strike at particularly vulnerable points of her target's body.

When backstabbing, the elf thief gains a bonus of +4 on the attack roll; if the target is hit, the damage done is twice normal (roll the damage for the weapon, multiply the

result by two, and then add any pertinent modifiers).

If the intended victim sees, hears, or is warned of the elf thief's approach, the elf thief's attack is *not* a backstab; it is an ordinary attack, doing the damage appropriate for the weapon used.

When no battle is in progress, a backstab attempt may require a Move Silently ability check.

Cast Spells from Magic-User Scrolls:

At 2nd level, an elf thief gains the ability to cast magic-user spells from spell scrolls. Due to an elf's innate affinity with magic, there is no chance of the spell backfiring as there is when a human thief attempts to cast a spell from a scroll.

Read Languages:

When the elf thief reaches 4th level, she gains an 80% chance to read any normal writing or language (including simple codes, dead languages, treasure maps, and so on, but not magical writings such as glyphs and wards). If she tries but fails to read a piece of writing, she must gain at least one experience level before trying to read it again.

Sniping:

At 8th level, elven thieves gain the sniping ability. Sniping is a ranged attack at an unsuspecting target within 30 feet (30 yards outdoors). The elf thief gains a bonus of +4 on the attack roll; if the target is hit, the damage done from the ranged weapon is twice normal (roll the damage for the weapon, multiply the results by two, and then add any pertinent modifiers).

¹ A full description of each of the thief abilities can be found on page 21 of the D&D Rules Cyclopedia.

If the intended victim sees, hears, or is warned of the elf thief's presence, the elf thief's attack is *not* a sniping attack.

When no battle is in progress, a sniping attempt may require a Move Silently ability check for the elven thief to get within range.

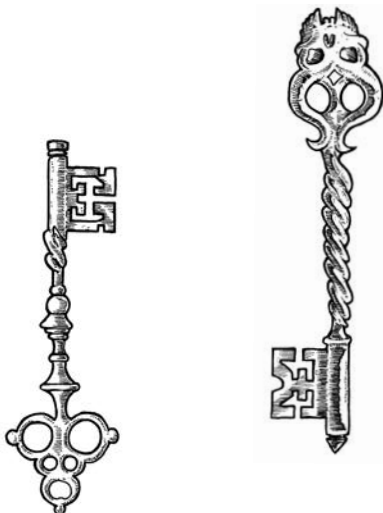
Higher Experience Levels

When an elf thief reaches *Name* (9th) level, she is called a master thief (whether male or female).

Further Advancement:

Upon achieving 10th level, the elf thief has reached her maximum skill in thieving ability. The elf thief's combat abilities, however, will continue to improve past 10th level with attack ranks.

(See **Table 6** in the Appendix to this article for details of XP progression)



Ability Bonus/Penalty Adjustments:

In the author's D&D campaign, ability scores have an effect on thief abilities in order to create more diversity amongst members of the thief class, as well as to provide additional support to the low percentile chances of the skills. As the elf thief is limited to 10th level in thieving abilities, players may find this optional system beneficial for that class, as well as all classes that use thief abilities (thief, rake, mystic, and bard).

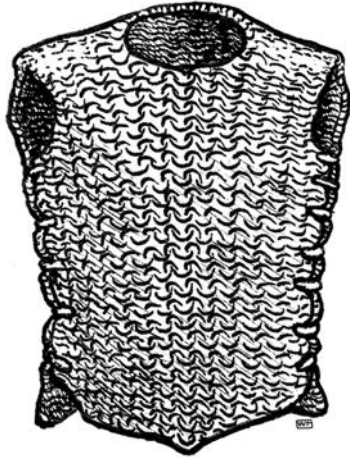
Each of the thief abilities are modified by the corresponding ability score (see Table 3). Add or subtract to each thief ability the appropriate ability score modifier multiplied by five (i.e. +1 gives +5%, +2 gives +10%, and +3 gives +15%). Remember, low ability scores will adversely affect thief abilities as well.

Table 3 – Thief Ability Modifiers

Thief Abilities	Ability Score
Open Locks	INT
Find Traps	INT
Remove Traps	INT
Climb Walls	DEX
Move Silently	DEX
Hide In Shadows	DEX
Pick Pockets	DEX
Hear Noise	WIS

ELF WARRIOR

As all elves are trained in martial combat, the elf warrior is one of the core classes of the elven race. They have knowledge in the use of all weapons both hand-to-hand and ranged, and may wear any type of armor.



In battle, elf warriors are graceful and deadly experts, often employing a superior strike-and-dodge technique of combat.

Elf warriors are not uncommon in any region populated by elven communities, and are quite prevalent in the northern realms of Ghyr, Wendar, Norworld, the Northern Wildlands, and the kingdoms of the Western Alliance.

Special Abilities

Fighter Maneuvers:

Elf warriors know the fighter maneuvers Set Spear vs. Attack and Lance Attack at 1st level.

Fighter Combat Options:

When the elf warrior's experience point total reaches 650,000, the character gains the ability to use Fighter Combat Options (disarm, parry, and smash). Multiple attacks are also gained at 650,000 experience points, which grants the elf warrior two attacks per round. Three attacks are possible at 2,200,000 experience points.

Elf Warrior Class Details

Prime Requisite: Strength.

Other Requirements: Intelligence score of 9 or more.

Experience Bonus: 5% for Strength 13-15, 10% for Strength 16-18.

Hit Dice: 1d6 per level up to 9th level. At 10th level +2 hit points, and Constitution adjustment no longer applies.

Maximum Level: 10th

Saving Throws: As Elf of equivalent level.

THACO: As Elf of equivalent level.

Alignment: Any.

Armor: All; shields permitted.

Weapons: Any.

Special Abilities: Fighter Maneuvers (Lance Attack, Set Spear vs. Charge); at 650,000 XP Fighter Combat Options; at 1,600,000 XP take half damage from breath weapons; infravision; extra languages (elf, gnoll, hobgoblin, orc); 1 in 3 chance to detect secret and hidden doors; immunity to ghoulish paralysis.

Weapon Mastery: Basic mastery in all weapons. Gain additional weapon choices as a standard elf.

Skills: Tracking and Treewalking required.

Higher Experience Levels

At *Name* (9th) level, an elf warrior is addressed as an Elf Lord (if male) or Elf Lady (if female).

Elf Warrior Sub-Classes:

Elf warriors may become avengers, druidic knights, knights, or paladins just as a normal human fighter may (see elven sub-classes later in this article).

If an elf warrior should become any of the above sub-classes before reaching 650,000 XP (but after achieving 9th level), then he will gain access to the Fighter Combat Options immediately.

Further Advancement:

After reaching maximum level (10th), elf warriors may continue to improve in combat ability by training with humans. As they continue to accumulate experience points, elf warriors advance in attack ranks, which greatly increases their fighting skill.

(See **Table 7** in the Appendix to this article for details of XP progression)



ELF MAGE

All elves have an innate affinity with magic. Those elves who follow a different path away from magical spellcasting may



return to it at any point before reaching 10th level in their current class by taking a secondary class known as the elf mage.

Becoming An Elf Mage:

The elf mage is a special dual class available only to elf clerics, elf druids, elf thieves, and elf warriors. To become an elf mage, the elf must have a minimum Intelligence of 9. As all elves are required to have an Intelligence of 9 or greater when first played, this should not be an issue. But if an elf character has had his Intelligence permanently reduced below 9 before attempting to become an elf mage (either through a *curse*, *wish* spell, or other misfortune), then he will fail the requirements of the dual class, and will not have the potential needed to wield magic as his elven brethren.

If the Intelligence score requirement is met, the elf must seek an elven teacher of at least 7th level who can instruct him in the ways of magical spellcasting. The teacher will provide to the student a spellbook that contains two 1st level spells, one of which is the *read magic* spell. The student may then begin his training.

Experience Bonuses:

If the elf mage's Intelligence score is 13 or greater, he earns a 5% bonus to experience points earned in every adventure for his elf

mage class. If his Intelligence is 16-18, he earns a 10% bonus to experience points for his elf mage class.

Level Advancement:

The experience points gained by an elf mage must be split between his normal advancement in his main class and the XP needed to advance as a mage. The player can divide these points as he wishes, but the level of the mage can never exceed the regular level of the main class. To become a 1st level elf mage requires 2,000 XP. The character must adventure for a while as his main elf class variant to earn these points; only after he has achieved them is he able to become a 1st level elf mage.

Spells:

Upon becoming a 1st level elf mage, the elf may now memorize and cast spells the same as a normal 1st level elf. In addition, the elf may cast spells while wearing armor (as all elves are capable of), can cast spells from magic-user scrolls, and can use magical items normally restricted to magic-users (wands, staves, etc.).

Restrictions:

An elf class variant character must choose to take the dual class elf mage before he surpasses 10th level in his main class. If he has not done so before exceeding 10th level, he may never do so. This is due to the elf lingering too long in the profession of his main class, and thus is no longer able to fully embrace the ways of elven magic.

In addition, a dual class elf mage must attain 10th level as a mage before advancing beyond 10th level in his main class. As stated above, the elf mage class may never exceed the

regular level of the main class. But the two classes should be equal in level before the elf advances beyond the 10th level by gaining attack ranks.

If the elf character wishes to advance beyond the 10th level with attack ranks before his mage class has reached 10th level, he may do so, but at a cost. Once the elf character advances beyond his main class's 10th level maximum, his mage class stops advancing, and will forever remain at its current level. For example, a 10th level elf thief/6th level elf mage who advances to attack rank D in his main class will have his mage class forever locked at 6th level. This is due to the elf character abandoning his magical studies in order to push himself past his main class's level maximum by focusing solely on his martial combat training.

Elf mages may only rise to 10th level in magical spellcasting ability. They may never increase their spellcasting power beyond the 10th level as elf magic-users and elf wizards can. This is due to their magical training being secondary to their main class abilities.

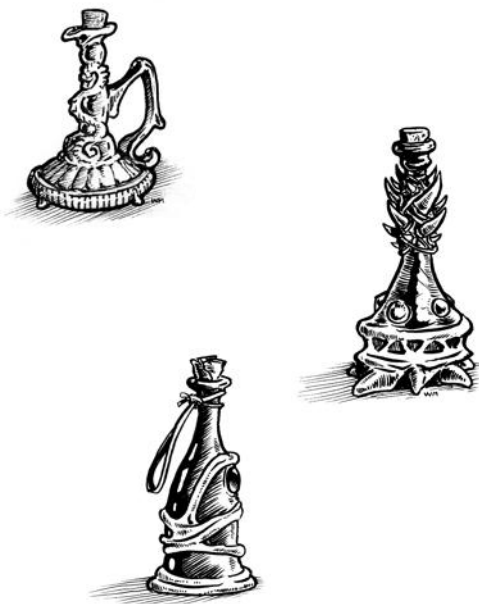
Elf Warrior/Mage

If an elf warrior should become a dual class elf mage, there is a special rule that applies. Once the two classes are the same level, the character must convert over to the standard elf class (fighter/magic-user). The player should add together the experience point totals for each class, and apply the total to the standard elf experience table.

For example, a 5th level elf warrior decides to pick up the elf mage dual class. After earning 2,000 XP he becomes a 5th level elf warrior/1st

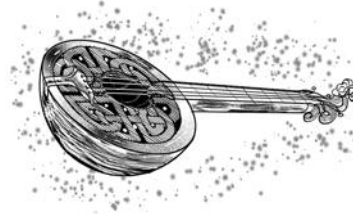
level elf mage. As he continues to adventure he splits his earned experience between the two classes. Eventually both his elf warrior class and elf mage class are 9th level. Since both classes are of equal level, he adds together the experience earned in both classes into one total. Thus he adds 240,000 XP from his elf warrior class to the 200,000 XP earned from his elf mage class. Together this equals 440,000 XP. When applied to the standard elf experience table, this places him over the minimum requirement to become a 9th level elf. The character now advances forward in the standard elf class.

(See **Table 8** in the Appendix to this article for details of XP progression)



OTHER ELF CLASS VARIANTS:

ELF BARD



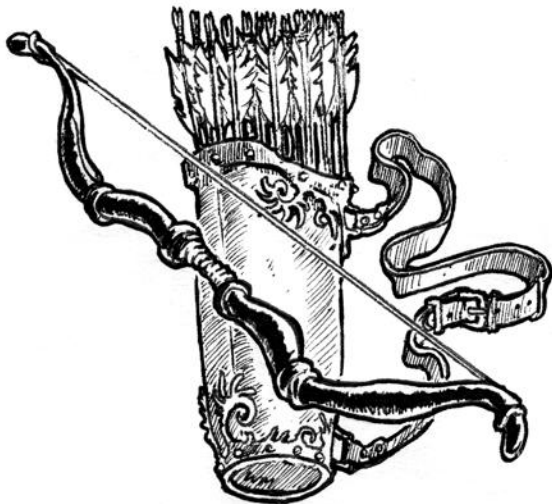
The option of the elf bard was first presented in the article "*The Bard: A Revitalized Class for the OD&D Game*"¹ from OD&Dities issue #11 (December 2003). If interested in using the bard as an elf class variant, implement the following changes:

- Use the Elf Cleric Experience Table for the elf bard's level advancement.
- Elf bards function as regular bards with no magical spellcasting ability of the standard elf class. They attack as thieves of equal level.
- The elf bard's thieving abilities should be modified using the elf thief's racial adjustment modifiers.
- The bard's charm ability is gained for elven bards at 3rd level (*charm person*), then increases in power at 9th level

¹ The bard class was first introduced by Bruce Heard in Dragon Magazine Issue #177 (January 1992). The class was further expanded by Geoff Gander, Marco Dalmonte, and Carl Quaif in OD&Dities issue #11 (December 2003)
<http://www.dragonsfoot.org/files/pdf/ODD11.pdf>.

(*charm monster*), again at 1,000,000 XP (*charm plant*), and once more at 1,825,000 XP (*mass charm*).

- At 10th level elf bards may continue advancing their martial fighting ability with attack ranks while their progression with bardic spell-songs and thief abilities halt.
- Alternatively, a 10th level elven bard may continue advancing as an elf minstrel by progressing his spell-song ability to 20th level while his fighting skills remain forever frozen at 10th level.
- The elf bard may choose to become a dual-classed elf mage.



ELVEN SUB-CLASSES

There are several sub-classes available to the standard elf character class. These include the avenger, druidic knight, knight, paladin, and wizard. All of these sub-classes may be transitioned into by a standard elf character at 9th level, save for the elf wizard, which is accessible at 10th level.

Elf class variants (bards, clerics, druids, magic-users, and thieves) may never transition into any of these sub-classes, except for elf warriors, who are barred only from the elf wizard sub-class.

ELVEN PALADINS/AVENGERS

Upon reaching 9th level, an elf may become a paladin (if Lawful) or an avenger (if Chaotic), just as a normal human fighter may¹. The elf must swear fealty to a church, and once accepted, begins a brief training period to acquire the abilities of a divine warrior². When this training is completed, the elf gains the abilities, restrictions, and obligations specific to paladins and avengers; this includes clerical spellcasting if the elf has a Wisdom score of 13 or greater.

The elf retains all normal elven abilities, including attack ranks, special defenses, and magical spellcasting. He continues to use the Elf Experience Table for advancement, with

¹ The original version of the elven paladin and avenger were introduced by Bruce Heard in Dragon Magazine Issue # 178 (February 1992).

² Full details of the paladin and avenger character classes can be found in the D&D Rules Cyclopedia.



each new attack rank becoming the equivalent of one new experience level for purposes of determining clerical turning and spellcasting. To calculate the clerical level of an elven paladin or avenger, divide the equivalent level by three and round down. For example, an elven paladin of attack rank J (16th level equivalent) would be able to turn undead and cast clerical spells as a 5th level cleric. Note that the highest clerical level an elven paladin or avenger may achieve is 6th level at attack rank M.

An elf who has not become a paladin or avenger before reaching attack rank F may never become one, as they have lingered too long in the ways of magic and profane warfare, and thus can no longer faithfully embrace the ways of the church.

Magical Spellcasting Loss:

Elven paladins and avengers who are able to wield clerical magic (by having a Wisdom score of 13 or greater) will lose some of their magical spellcasting ability as they advance in their new class. This is due to the effects of time spent studying clerical scriptures, meditating, and praying, which inevitably replaces the elf's efforts to study and maintain knowledge of the more powerful magical spells.

Upon gaining 2nd level clerical spells at attack rank E, the elf loses the ability to cast 5th level magical spells. At attack rank K, the elf gains 3rd level clerical spells, but loses access to 4th level magical spells. This will leave elven paladins and avengers of attack ranks K through M with the ability to cast up to 3rd level magical and clerical spells.

Fighter Combat Options:

If the elf should become a paladin or avenger before reaching 850,000 XP (but after achieving 9th level), then he will immediately gain access to the Fighter Combat Options (disarm, parry, and smash).

General Skills:

Elven paladins and avengers are required to take Ceremony as their next available skill choice if they do not already possess the skill.

ELVEN DRUIDIC KNIGHTS



A *Neutral* traveling elf may become a druidic knight¹. To do so, the elf must have adopted the philosophy of the druids prior to reaching 9th level, and must swear fealty to a prince, king, or emperor faithful to the ways of the druids. The Confederated Kingdom of Robrenn is the only kingdom that druidic knights are known to exist.

In addition to all the obligations and advantages common to knights, the druidic knight must assist any woodland being asking for help with two exceptions: He does not have to help creatures opposed to the druidic philosophy and goals; and if the druidic knight is on a mission for a higher authority (such as a quest, serving a duke, etc.), he may offer only a small amount of help. Assistance never involves the donation

¹ The druidic knight was introduced by Bruce Heard in Dragon Magazine Issue # 177 (January 1992), which is reprinted here in the majority with minor updates.

of money or items, only the offering of personal services for a short time.

The elven druidic knight functions in the same manner as elven paladins and avengers in regards to retaining all normal elven abilities, including attack ranks, special defenses, and magical spellcasting. He continues to use the Elf Experience Table for advancement, with each new attack rank becoming the equivalent of one new experience level for purposes of determining druidic spellcasting.

Note that druidic knights, just as normal druids, have no power to turn undead.

An elf who has not become a druidic knight before reaching attack rank F may never become one, as they have lingered too long in the ways of magic and profane warfare to follow the path of the druidic warrior.

Detect Danger:

An elven druidic knight can *detect danger* (as per the druidic spell) once per hour, simply by concentrating (the range is 5' per druidic spellcasting level). The elven druidic knight may not use the ability and attack in the same round.

Druidic Spells:

If the elven druidic knight's Wisdom score is 13 or more, the character can cast druidic spells as if he were a druid of one-third his actual experience level (rounded down). Each new attack rank becomes the equivalent of one new experience level for purposes of determining druidic spellcasting. The spells are from the druidic spell list only, and do not include clerical spells.

Magical Spellcasting Loss:

Elven druidic knights who are able to wield druidic magic (by having a Wisdom score of 13 or greater) will lose some of their magical spellcasting ability as they advance in their new class. This is due to the effects of time spent studying druidic rituals, meditating, and communing with nature, which inevitably replaces the elf's efforts to study and maintain knowledge of the more powerful magical spells.

Upon gaining 2nd level druidic spells at attack rank E, the elf loses the ability to cast 5th level magical spells. At attack rank K, the elf gains 3rd level druidic spells, but loses access to 4th level magical spells. This will leave elven druidic knights of attack ranks K through M with the ability to cast up to 3rd level magical and druidic spells.

Fighter Combat Options:

If an elf should become a druidic knight before reaching 850,000 XP (but after achieving 9th level), then he will immediately gain access to the Fighter Combat Options (disarm, parry, and smash).

Armor and Weapons:

A druidic knight may not wield metallic weapons nor wear metallic armor and shields. The elf must use leather armor and wooden shields and weapons magically shaped and hardened by the druids. These items are usually lacquered or varnished, and include curvilinear decorations, delicate leaf carvings, and fine scrollwork tooled into the wood. The druidic knight must repay the druids for these precious items, usually in terms of several years of routine service when not called upon by a liege.

General Skills:

Druidic knights are required to take Ceremony and Nature Lore as their next available skill choices if they do not already possess them upon becoming a druidic knight.

Hirelings:

Druidic hirelings may include demi-humans (especially halflings or elves) and woodland beings. An elven druidic knight cannot have more Hit Dice worth of hirelings than his druidic spellcasting level. In other words, if an elven druidic knight can cast spells as a 3rd level druid, he may not have more than 3 HD worth of hirelings accompany him.

ELVEN KNIGHTS

A traveling elf of any alignment may become an elven knight¹.

To gain knighthood, an elf must be at least 9th level, and must swear fealty to a prince, king, or emperor. Elven knights prefer elven monarchs, but otherwise may swear fealty to a human monarch, although the latter is rare. Once the ruler declares the character a knight, that ruler becomes the elven knight's "liege." The elven knight follows the same rules, obligations, and restrictions as a normal human knight².

¹ The existence of demi-human knights was first briefly mentioned on page 18 of the Player's Companion book of the D&D Companion rules set.

² Full details of the knight character class can be found in the D&D Rules Cyclopedia.

An elf may become a knight at any point after reaching 9th level, up to and including attack rank M.

Fighter Combat Options:

If an elf should become a knight before reaching 850,000 XP (but after achieving 9th level), then he will immediately gain access to the Fighter Combat Options (disarm, parry, and smash).

ELF WIZARDS

An elf who attains 10th level may decide to become an elf wizard¹. Elf wizards are elves who focus solely on increasing their magical spellcasting ability while allowing their martial abilities to languish.

To become an elf wizard, the elf must be a member of a clan that possess a Tree of Life, and receive magical training from the clan's Treekeeper. Treekeepers teach elven magic² to their students, which is similar to that of human magic-users, but due to their connection with the Immortal Ilsundal and the Trees of Life, partakes quite a bit of druidic magic.

Elves who learn their magic from the Keeper of the Tree of Life can progress in their magical spellcasting beyond the 10th level of experience, just as fighting elves who learn their martial abilities from humans can progress beyond the 10th level of fighting.

¹ Elf wizards first introduced in GAZ5 The Elves of Alfheim.

² Full details on elven magic spells can be found in GAZ5 The Elves of Alfheim.

The experience point levels are the same as those for elves increasing their fighting ability, but earned experience points are applied to gaining magic levels only. Thus while the elf wizard's magical



spellcasting increases with each new 'level,' his fighting ability is frozen at 10th level and will never increase. In addition, the elf wizard does not gain Fighter Combat Options or multiple attacks.

Increased Spell Damage:

As an elf wizard gains magic levels past the 10th level, the amount of damage inflicted by damage-causing spells increases as well, just as it does for a normal human magic-user. For example, an elf wizard of magic level 12 can inflict 12d6 damage with a *lightning bolt* spell.

Magic Item Creation:

An elf wizard who attains 9th level may create magical items, just as a normal human magic-user can. When attempting to create magic items, the elf wizard uses his magic level instead of his regular elf level when calculating the success chance.

(See **Table 9** in the Appendix to this article for details of XP progression)

APPENDIX

Table 4 – Elf Cleric/Elf Druid Experience Table

Level	XP	Attack Rank	Spells / Level						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	0		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	2,100		1	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	4,200		2	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	8,400		2	1	-	-	-	-	-
5	17,000		2	2	-	-	-	-	-
6	35,000		2	2	1	-	-	-	-
7	70,000		3	2	2	-	-	-	-
8	140,000		3	3	2	1	-	-	-
9	240,000		3	3	3	2	-	-	-
10	400,000	A	4	4	3	2	1	-	-
	600,000	B							
	800,000	C							
	1,000,000	D							
	1,200,000	E							
	1,400,000	F							
	1,600,000	G#							
	1,825,000	H							
	2,050,000	I							
	2,275,000	J							
	2,500,000	K							

Automatically take 1/2 damage from any breath weapon.

Table 5 – Elf Magic-User Experience Table

Level	XP	Spells / Level								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	0	1								
2	3,200	2								
3	6,400	2	1							
4	12,800	2	2							
5	26,000	2	2	1						
6	52,000	3	2	2						
7	105,000	3	3	2	1					
8	210,000	4	3	2	2					
9	400,000	4	4	3	2					
10	600,000	5	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
(11)	850,000	6	5	3	3	2	-	-	-	-
(12)	1,100,000	6	5	4	3	2	1	-	-	-
(13)	1,350,000	7	6	4	4	3	2	-	-	-
(14)#	1,600,000	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	-	-
(15)	1,800,000	8	7	5	5	4	3	2	-	-
(16)	2,000,000	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	-
(17)	2,200,000	8	8	6	6	5	4	3	2	-
(18)	2,400,000	8	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
(19)	2,600,000	8	8	7	7	6	5	4	3	2
(20)	2,800,000	8	8	8	7	6	5	4	4	3

Automatically take 1/2 damage from any breath weapon.

Table 6 – Elf Thief Experience Table

Level	XP	Attack	Thief Abilities							
		Rank	OL	FT	RT	CW	MS	HS	PP	HN
1	0		10	10	10	87	25	20	25	35
2	2,000		15	15	15	88	30	25	30	40
3	4,000		20	20	20	89	35	30	35	45
4	8,000		25	25	25	90	40	34	40	50
5	16,000		30	30	30	91	45	38	45	55
6	32,000		35	35	34	92	49	42	50	59
7	64,000		40	40	38	93	53	45	55	63
8	125,000		45	45	42	94	57	48	60	67
9	240,000		49	50	46	95	60	51	65	71
10	400,000	A	53	54	50	96	63	54	70	75
	600,000	B								
	850,000	C								
	1,100,000	D								
	1,350,000	E								
	1,600,000	F#								
	1,800,000	G								
	2,000,000	H								
	2,200,000	I								
	2,400,000	J								
	2,600,000	K								

Automatically take 1/2 damage from any breath weapon.

Table 7 – Elf Warrior
Experience Table

Level	XP	Attack Rank
1	0	
2	2200	
3	4,400	
4	8,800	
5	17,000	
6	35,000	
7	70,000	
8	140,000	
9	250,000	
10	425,000	C
	650,000	D*
	850,000	E
	1,100,000	F
	1,350,000	G
	1,600,000	H#
	1,480,000	I
	2,000,000	J
	2,200,000	K**
	2,400,000	L
	2,600,000	M

* Fighter Combat Options and Multiple Attacks.
 ** Three attacks per round.
 # Automatically take ½ damage from any breath weapon.

Table 8 – Elf Mage Experience Table

Level	XP	Spells / Level				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	2,000	1	-	-	-	-
2	3,000	2	-	-	-	-
3	4,000	2	1	-	-	-
4	8,000	2	2	-	-	-
5	16,000	2	2	1	-	-
6	32,000	3	2	2	-	-
7	60,000	3	3	2	1	-
8	125,000	4	3	2	2	-
9	200,000	4	4	3	2	-
10	300,000	5	4	3	2	1

Table 9 – Elf / Elf Wizard Experience Table

Level	XP	Attack Rank	Spells / Level								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	0		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	4,000		2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	8,000		2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	16,000		2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	32,000		2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	64,000		3	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	120,000		3	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
8	250,000		4	3	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
9	400,000		4	4	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
10	600,000	C	5	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
(11)	850,000	D*	6	5	3	3	2	-	-	-	-
(12)	1,100,000	E	6	5	4	3	2	1	-	-	-
(13)	1,350,000	F	7	6	4	4	3	2	-	-	-
-14	1,600,000	G#	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	-	-
(15)	1,850,000	H	8	7	5	5	4	3	2	-	-
(16)	2,100,000	I	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	-
(17)	2,350,000	J	8	8	6	6	5	4	3	2	-
(18)	2,600,000	K**	8	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
(19)	2,850,000	L	8	8	7	7	6	5	4	3	2
(20)	3,100,000	M	8	8	8	7	6	5	4	4	3

Elves advance up to 10th level then continue on with attack ranks.
 Elf wizards advance up to 20th level with magical spell casting only.
 They do not gain attack ranks, and their hit rolls remain frozen at 10th level.

* Fighter Combat Options, Multiple Attacks for standard elves only.
 ** Three attacks per round for standard elves only.
 # Automatically take 1/2 damage from any breath weapon.

The Fall and Rise of the Canolbarth

by Robin

This article compiles and expands the history of the Canolbarth Forest, focusing primarily on the time after AC 1000.

In the timeline, boxed text denotes canonical information excerpted from *Wrath of the Immortals*, the *Poor Wizard's Almanacs*, and *Joshuan's Almanac*; covering years 1004 to 1013; as well as events from the fan-produced *Mystaran Almanacs*, covering years from 1014 to 1019.

Text in normal typeface notes original material from the author, inspired by posts on The Piazza forum by users "*Gecko*" and "*julius cleaver*". Character's details; by *Joseph Setorius*.

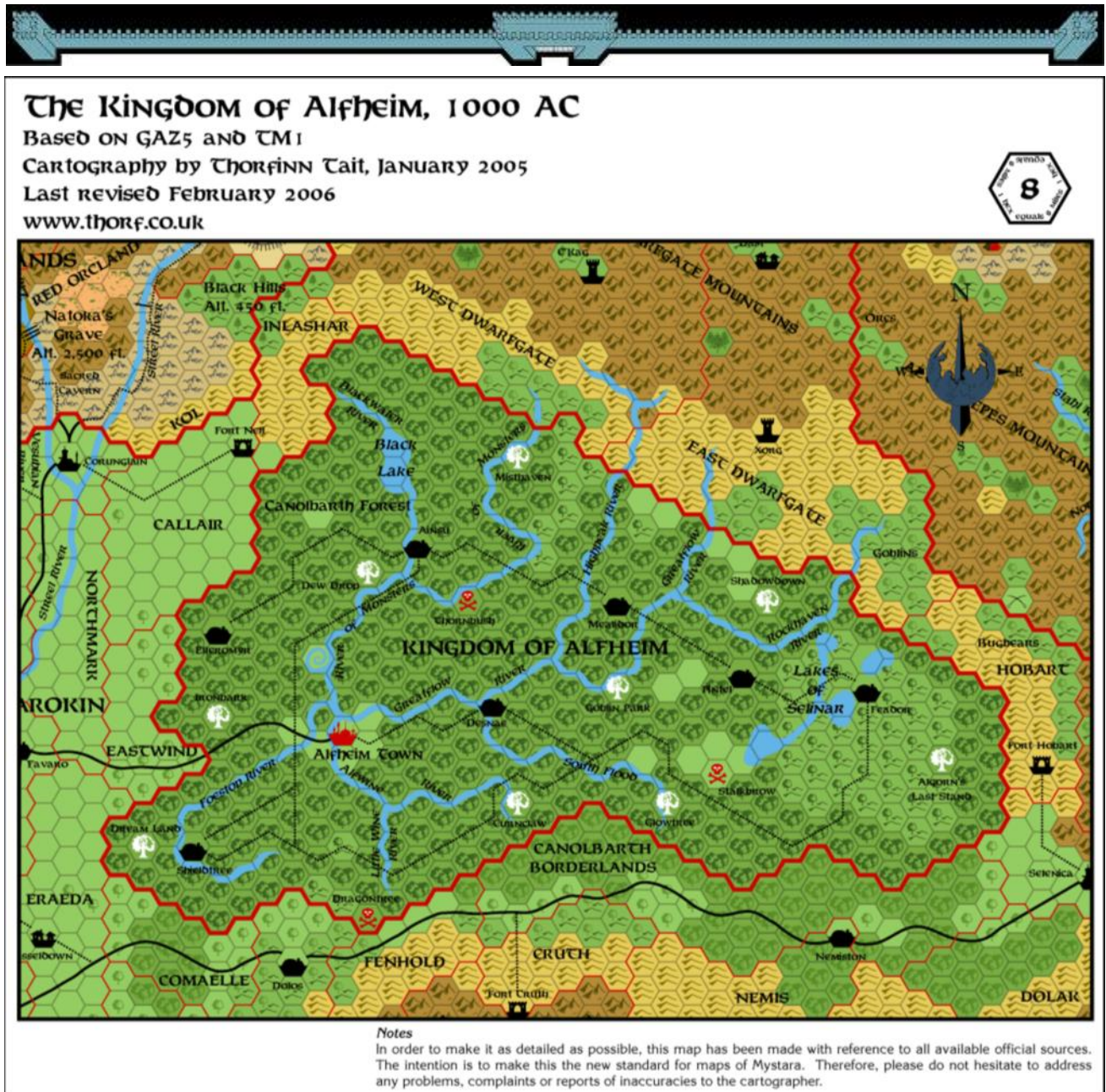
1004 AC:

Wrath of the Immortals begins, Rafiel and Rad are deeply drawn into the conflict.

1004 AC, Spring:

Atzanteotl asks Rafiel, to his knowledge an Entropic Immortal, to join the Brotherhood of the Shadow. Rad & Rafiel consider that having Rafiel inside this organization will work to their benefit. Therefore they conspire to have Rafiel function as a double agent for the Fellowship of the Star. Rafiel thus agrees to Atzanteotl's offer, learning the goal of the Brotherhood of the Shadow is to continually help the less powerful side, thus prolonging the conflict.

Invited to visit Pandius by Ilsundal, the elven hero Engledoc Dewsap, accidentally stumbles upon this meeting just before leaving. Knowing Ilsundal is embroiled in the war, Engledoc decides to first investigate this apparent allegiance himself. He overhears



Canolbarth prior to 1004 AC

them discussing the Shadow Elves, and how they might be plotting against Alfheim. When Engledoc informs his Patron Immortal, Ilsundal explains that Atzanteotl is an ancient enemy. Ilsundal surmises one of them is patron of the Shadow Elves, and he bids Engledoc try and uncover what the two, apparently Entropic, Immortals are planning with their mortal followers.

1005 AC Summer:

Atzanteotl suggests to Rafael the Shadow Elves invade Alfheim adding their participation to the cause. Rafael agrees, and Atzanteotl offers to gift the Shadow Elves with a new spell able to corrupt the Trees of Life, thus weakening the Canolbarth and the Alfheim elves. With Alfheim controlled by the Shadow Elves,

Engledoc Dewsap

Engledoc is first described in GAZ5 “The Elves of Alfheim”, Page 55, TSR 9223. He is described as being the “Tavernkeeper” of Quickneedle's Rest in Alfheim Town, which he has owned for around a century.

History: Engledoc's parents were born from mixed elf-human unions, though Engledoc is wholly elven. In his younger years he adventured throughout the Known World, even spending some time in Rockhome disguised as human mage. During the last century; however, much of that time was spent with Talyn Grunalf, wandering across the Darokin borderlands. Finally the pull of the forest drew him home...just not all the way. He adopted his current name shortly after taking charge of Quickneedle's.

Personality: Quiet and laid back by human standards, yet seen as jumpy and assertive by forest elves. Wide variety of friends and acquaintances from Quickneedle's, but has little influence, despite having access to most current rumors. Engledoc holds no Clan ties.

Appearance: Tall and heavily built for an elf 5'8" and 160 pounds, but would seem slim among human warriors; with curly black hair and blue eyes. Age: 350. Dresses in typical Alfheim Town fashion, usually sporting a brown leather apron when keeping bar.

DMing Notes: Engledoc is one of the more immediately accessible NPCs for the character to meet. Before the start of the war, he is usually encountered at

Quickneedle's Rest. After the war's commencement, he can be found virtually anywhere in the forest, recruiting the characters to help in his quest.

Combat Notes: E9; AC 8; hp 42; MV 120' (40'); #AT 1; D 5-10 (Elven Longsword +2 +1 vs humanoids and Str. Bonus); Save E7; ML 9; AL LN; ST 15, IN 16, WI 14, DX 15 CO 11, CH 14, CM 12. [Base AC 8; with magic 6]

Favoured Spells: Engledoc employs spells good for quieting down rambunctious patrons and detecting possible trouble; such as Sleep, Charm Person and Detect Evil. Level I: Charm Person, Detect Magic, Sleep. Level II: Detect Evil, Wizard Lock/Knock. Level III: Clairvoyance, Dispel Magic, Hold Person, Protection from Normal Missiles. Level IV: Charm Monster, Remove Curse, Wizard Eye.

Abilities & Skills: Knowledge of Alfheim Town (I), Knowledge of Rockhome (I), Persuasion (CH), Riding (D), Tavernkeeping (W), Tracking (I).

Languages: Elvish, Thyatian, Darokin, Dwarven, Orc (Tharian), Gnoll (Dwarfgate), Hobgoblin (Everast).

Magic Items: Engledoc still has his Ring of Djinni Summoning, and Wand of Illusion (5 charges). In combat he uses an Elven Longsword +2, (+1 vs Humanoids).

Faith: Ilsundal.

Dislikes: Boredom, Brawls, Betrayal and Intrigue. Also Orcs and Trolls.

Likes: Quickneedle's Rest, good conversation, and a hearty brew!

Fears: Shadow Elves, the Undead, and being dead!

Additional Notes: Engledoc still pines for Talyn, despite thinking him being the one who ended the relationship. Engledoc still wanted to adventure, when Talyn wanted to return home. In fact, he questions what brought him back. His longing for home, or his desire for her. He has yet to start another relationship, and is unaware of Perfynn and Talyn's recent elopement.

Some of Engledoc's current statistics vary from those in the gazetteer, as he has acquired better weapons, equipment and experience over the last decades. His soul statistics in Limbo will be the same, with the same items (being soul reflections actually) according to Limbo rules, as explained by Bruce Heard's article on Undead in Dragon #180 and in "[Monster Manual compilation book Undead](#)".

Atzanteotl plans on crushing Darokin, thus giving his followers a chance of striking Glantri. Moreover, the destruction of Alfheim is one of his paramount goals, and Ilsundal one of his most hated enemies. Rafael sees an opportunity to rid Glantri of a powerful ally and grant his followers what he long promised them; however, he prefers not to involve his Shamans in this scheme, keeping them and his secret project hidden from Atzanteotl's prying eyes, and so willingly accepts Atzanteotl's spell.

1005 AC, Felmont 19:

Xatapechtli, head of the Shadow Elven spy-network, dreams of an ancient tome about the Trees of Life secreted somewhere within Alfheim. In the dream an Azcan voice whispers the manuscript must be found if he wants to take revenge upon the Alfheim elves¹.

1005 AC, Fyrmont 12:

Shadow Elves spies found evidence of a book detailing Ilsundal's struggles to create the Trees of Life and quickly locate and manage to steal it, allowing Kanafasti to learn it's vital knowledge.

Engledoc was fortuitously conducting research in the Library Tree at Pinitel, learning Shadow Elves were recently seen in the library, consulting an ancient tome about the early days of Alfheim. Engledoc discovers the book is missing, and manages to track the culprits. The chase ending in an ominous part of the Canolbarth, west of Black Lake. The forest has changed here, as giant fungi replace dead trees, making it a

¹ **The dream** is planted in Xatapechtli's mind by Atzanteotl, seeing a willing subject. Atzanteotl had discovered the creation of the Trees of Life was penned in the same source which was later used in the creation of the Canolbarth. However; he has no idea which specific source it is, other than knowing it is old beyond reckoning, and probably hidden in one of Alfheim's Libraries. The creation process could thus be the basis of knowledge the Shadow Elves need to corrupt the Canolbarth Forest and the Trees of Life. Throughout the following months; Serpent Eyes, Shadow Elven Spies, will scour Alfheim for the ancient and invaluable manuscript.

dark and gloomy environment of massive trees and giant toadstools.

Here Engledoc witnesses the Shadow Elf spies entering a hidden cave, well-lit from inside. As Engledoc views the leader of the group, a dark shade in opposing light, an assassin aided by silence and invisibility spells, slings a garotte around his throat. The Shadow Elves became aware of their pursuer, and thus ended the threat to their secret plans.¹

1005 AC, FYRMONT 27:

Atzanteotl visits Kanafasti incorporeally, providing knowledge needed to research a new spell able to eventually weaken the Canolbarth forest and kill the Trees of Life. Allowing the Shadow Elves to drive the Alfheim Elves out. Rafiel allows Atzanteotl's intervention. Unfortunately, Rafiel doesn't realize Atzanteotl's magic would forever corrupt the forest, Entropy being what it is.

Engledoc; famed elven adventurer, murdered to cover up the Shadow Elves evil plot; awakens next to his body. With the cave entrance concealed once again, and no one knowing what has occurred, in his panicked state, Engledoc decides to call for help. Soon after discovering his spirit, for unknown reasons, is not bound to his body or final resting place², Engledoc discovers how to

¹ **Concealed Shadow Elf caverns;** These can be located more easily than expected, as Shadow Elves unknowingly transport spores from their enormous underground fungi with them, which then take root in the forest near their point of egress, brushed off by vegetation where it is still moist and dark

enter the dreams of prominent elves across Alfheim whispering his name and short invocative phrase: "**Mordunastar Vargalos**".³

Yet the nature of the invocation, or its apparent purpose is unknown. Whether signifying a name, place, object, or magic password remains a mystery. However; the location of his body also remains unknown. The only clue to its location coming in whispered dreams. It remains unseen if the fair elves can find the tomb's whereabouts in time to stop the evil plot. It is said one may commune with the dead at his body, learning crucial elements of events threatening all of Alfheim.

1006 AC, FLAURMONT 12:

The team of Shadow Elf wizards led by Kanafasti successfully completes research of the new spell.⁴ Tunnel Shapers work

enough for their propagation.

² **A ghost** is either bound to the original body, a specific item, or to the location it perished, unable to wander more than a few hundred feet away. Only on rare occasions is a ghost "able to wander freely. This can come about through great need, a quest, or magical influences. All three are taking place here.

³ In Elvish **Mord únēs tar** = *Black first standing*, **Var Galoth** = *Either light hole*. The "d" attached to "Mor" denotes an identity or person. This explains that a shaded person may be hidden by light from behind. The cave was well-lit inside at the moment of Engledoc's demise. The dreams sent throughout Alfheim are thus Engledoc's dying thoughts.

⁴ **Atzanteotl's Spell of Devastation;** In actuality the spell is a complex ritual, being cast over several weeks, employing multiple



The region of Engledoc's assassination¹

¹ This map is part of a larger map that will be finished with further information revealed in this magazine. The whole map will be made available shortly after the publication of this Threshold issue.

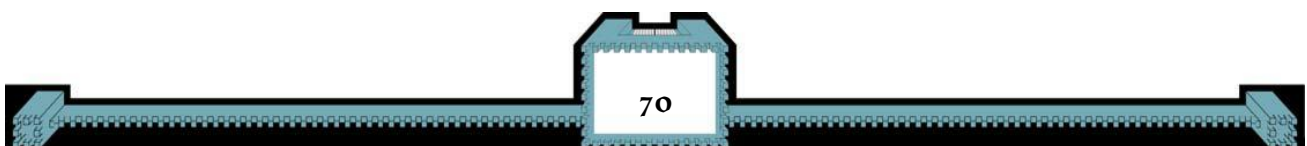
hard constructing a network of tunnels running beneath all of Alfheim; imbuing the Canolbarth with the spell's effect; in preparation for the invasion.

1006 AC, SUMMER:

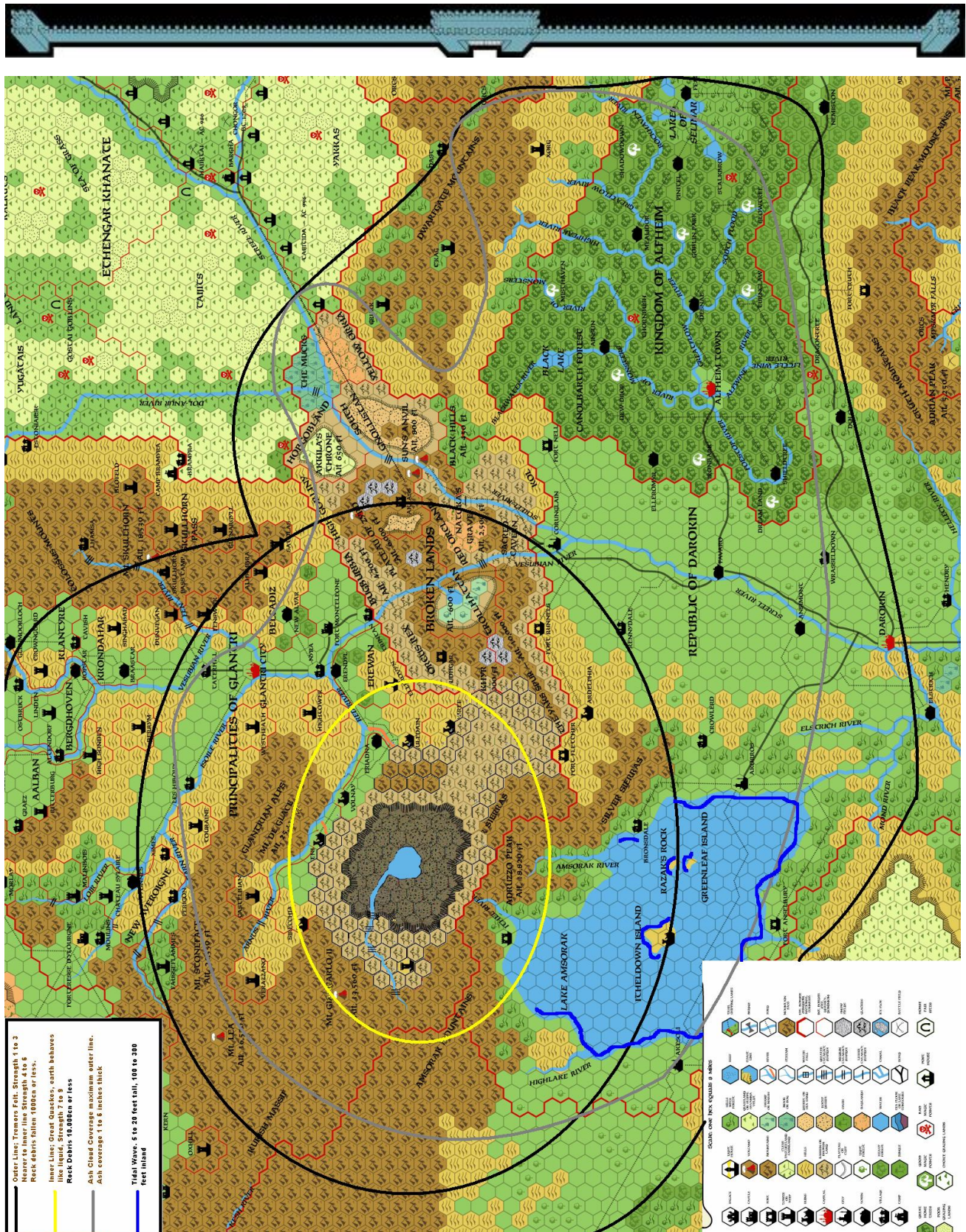
An enormous meteor slams into northern Darokin, the Silver Sierras and the Amsorak Mountains, creating a crater dozens of miles in diameter. The resulting earthquake topples buildings as

casters, and more powerful than anyone believes, excepting Atzanteotl; able to corrupt not only the Trees of Life but the entire forest.

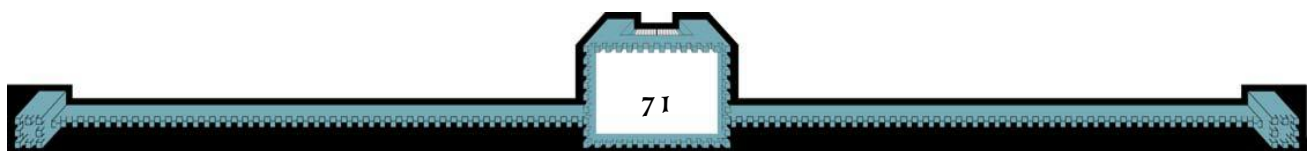
far south as Akesoli and is felt as far north as Glantri City. The debris cloud rising from the impact is larger than several countries. Spread by the last western winds of the season, the cloud covers all of Southern Glantri and Northern Darokin as far east as central Alfheim. The immediate loss of life is tragic, however, the impenetrable cloud remains in the air for days, blocking out the sun. When it finally settles, ash covers everything, killing plants and fouling water. The cloud and ash have a combined catastrophic effect on both Glantri and Darokin's crops, ruining harvests and threatening famine in the



The Fall and Rise of the Canolbarth



The Great Meteor Impact



upcoming seasons. Even the Elven Hometrees seem mildly affected, stunted in fruit production and foliage growth.

1006 AC, Ambyrmont 17:

In a secret meeting in the King's Palace between Telemon, Kanafasti, Xatapechtli and General Garafaele, the King urges the Royal Wizard to act now and orders the Radiant General to start drafting a wartime army. Taking advantage of the confusion created by the meteor strike in Northern Darokin this summer, Telemon urges Kanafasti to start casting the spell.

Xatapechtli is increasingly convinced of the power of Atzanteotl and secretly sways from following Rafiel's guidance to Atzanteotl's coercion, wooed by promises of great power.

1006 AC, Ambyrmont 24:

Led by Kanafasti, the most powerful mages gather in tunnels running beneath the Canolbarth Forest and begin the complex magical ritual, which will take at least a month to have any appreciable effects and considerable time before affecting the Trees of Life.

1006 AC, Sviftmont 4:

As the forest begins to darken, Treekeeper of clan Grunalf, Talyn Grunalf, contacts her Tree of Life and learns of a great impending catastrophe. This is the first effect of Atzanteotl's magic, more mutations will follow in the next weeks. Fairies and Treants, aware of the pervasive undertow, try to discover what is corrupting the Forest's life-force.

Wood-imps congregate and prepare, making allegiance with the Shadow elves.

Engledoc's spirit continues to muster support, by appearing in the dreams of Elven Heroes, but fears he is too late. Now learning his fate, Engledoc has yet to accept it.

1006 AC, Sviftmont 28:

Since Talyn Grunalf gave alarm, three weeks past, the forest has become even darker and more twisted. Trees stop growing new leaves and plants stop making flowers; herbivores strive to find food. The elves are at loss to explain this strange disease, other than surmising it is the consequence of meteor fallout. Trees of Life continue to make leaves, but feel a deep pain coming from the very earth through their roots, while anxious Treekeepers and Fairies search ways to reverse the process. In the meantime the forest becomes increasingly inhospitable to the elves. The Shadow Elves have thus far concealed their infiltration into Alfheim.

1006 AC, Kaldmont 21:

Five elves are found dead and ten others seriously sickened after drinking water from a nearby spring. Careful investigation reveals the water has been poisoned. This is another consequence of the spell. By now the trees have stopped growing and leaves begin falling. Many small plants and herbivores have already perished. Carnivores have trouble finding game and many springs become poisonous.

Talyn Grunalf

Treekeeper of Clan Grunalf

History: Talyn has spent nearly her entire life within the bounds of the Canolbarth, and she is infinitely familiar with the Northern tip of the forest, including Dew Drop and M i s t h a v e n .



Though Talyn rarely travels beyond the River of Monsters, she is often found as far North as the Emerlas.

In her wanderlust youth, along with her companion and love) Engledoc Dewsap, she traveled throughout the Darokin borderlands, almost twice meeting her doom. The first being, along the foothills of the Dwarf gates, running into a Bargda and his Ogre and Troll minions. She and Engledoc Dewsap the only members of their party to escape. Afterwards, Talyn spent some years in both Glantri City and Selenica before permanently returning to the forest. Upon returning, and traversing the Selinar region, she was almost slain by Dûr-tirn, The Dark Watcher, an evil Beholder minion of the wizard Moorkroft. Only with the aid of Druid Cucurbita Pepo, did she evade death. When her parents found out that she had taken up with an elf of mixed elf-human unions, she was forced to distance herself from him and return to her studies. Grudgingly she

The magical springs and lakes slowly darken and lose their power. Crystal growth still continues as if unaffected.

1006 AC, Kaldmont 28:

Treekeepers from all the seven major clans meet today in Feador to discuss the matter. Feadiel and Grunalf clans agree on the need of relocating their communities elsewhere to prevent the Trees of Life's demise. Clans Long Runner and Mealidil bitterly disagree about abandoning Alfheim, though not even within the Annals of Mealiden is anything similar to the current situation mentioned. Fairies convene at Dreamland, requesting information. King Oberon prepares faerie ring enchantments, keeping them a secret for now, but readied for future use.

1007 AC, Nuwmont 13:

Clanmaster Lynnwyl Chossum is unknowingly poisoned by Carlisan, Counsellor to Lynnwyl, in a secret plot to allow a Shadow Elf to take Lynnwyl's place.

1007 AC, Nuwmont 15:

After a short struggle with death, Lynnwyl finally succumbs; yet before passing away he picks Carlisan as his replacement. This is a major achievement for Shadow Elves, now fully in control of one of the leading clans.

1007 AC, Thaumont 15:

The Council of the Clans convenes in Elleromyr today to discuss the proposal

of leaving Alfheim. King Doriath charges his ambassadors with beseeching Known World rulers and elven clans for asylum. The once mighty trees of Alfheim are now twisted and dying, other plants are already dead and the animal population has drastically decreased. Increasingly more elves and fairies think leaving is the best solution, but many still refuse. Clans Feadiel and Grunalf are concerned about the Trees of Life; Clan Chossum, now controlled by Shadow Elves, is anxious to sell whatever is needed to make such a journey, and Clan Erendyl thinks leaving Alfheim is reasonable for the time being. Clan Mealidil doesn't want to leave the country founded by Mealiden, believing an answer for the dilemma may still be found examining the ancient tomes, being only a matter of time until a cure is discovered. Mistrusting all non-elves, Clan Long-Runner doesn't want to have any contact with the outside world's supposed generosity; while Clan Red Arrow is mostly concerned about the danger of such an exodus; their role being to protect the other clans.

1007 AC, Flaurmont 11:

By now King Doriath has received reports from all his ambassadors: King Stefan of Karamikos, King Gylharen of Wendar, and Princess Carlotina of Erewan in Glantri agree to give the elves of Alfheim asylum, should they need to leave the forest. Now aware there are nations able to host them, the Alfheim elves only need plan their flight.

accepted, being taken by "Pepo" to meet Ara-Laur uin Eryn, the Old King of the Woods. It was the ancient Treant's philosophical ponderings that eventually set her on the Way of the Tree.

Personality: Talyn is generally reserved, but when peril or politics threaten the clan she musters an assertive resolve to argue her point, or defend the clan. Though she and Durifern Widefarer are seldom in disagreement, Talyn often wishes he was more attentive to clan duties. His frequent hunting trips regularly require Talyn to assume both role of Treekeeper and Clanmaster. In fact, should Durifern and Talyn ever come to odds, most likely the bulk of the clan would follow her lead. His terse manner is also a matter of contention between them. Frequently, she torments him with youthful inquiries and demands, until finally getting her way.

Appearance: Only 242 years old, Talyn is both young at heart and of mind. At only 5'2" tall, and 110 pounds; she exudes a fit and youthful vigor. Although fair-complected, her life in the outdoors has given her a healthy tan. Talyn is immediately recognizable, boasting platinum blond hair, graced by unusual streaks of grey; which she wears unbound save a single pleat in back. A consequence of her encounter with a Beholder years ago. Elves being somewhat innately magical, the Beholder's anti-magic ray "aged" her locks. Talyn's blue-green eyes have a jewel-like quality. Depending on the light, they appear either like sapphires, in sunlight and bright environments, or resemble emeralds, in low-light or

darkness. Giving her excellent vision in any given situation. She primarily dresses in green and brown shades, dappled with orange and yellow hues. The colors of the forest.

DMing Notes: Despite assuming her responsibilities only ninety-two years past, after the sudden and unexpected death of the former Treekeeper, Talyn is nonetheless a capable Keeper, yet still a wanderer and adventurer at heart. While characters will only find a cold shoulder from Durifern, they might receive warm welcome from Talyn. Provided of course they prove themselves friends and worthy defenders of the forest.

Personality: Silent, yet curious, careful, yet intelligent, when younger boisterous.

Combat Notes: E12th level Treekeeper; AC 4(base 8, magic+2); hp 46; MV 120' (40'); #AT 2 (Attack Class D); D 1d8+3 (Quarterstaff +1, EX Mastery); Save E10; ML 11; AL N(G); ST 8, IN 16, WI 17, DX 14, CO 14, CH 16, CM 18. [Magic Base: 6]

Abilities & Skills: Animal Empathy—Forest Animals (CH), Forest Survival (W), Hiding (I), Knowledge of Canolbarth Forest—Focus Trees of Life (I), Lore—Clan Grunalf (I), Lore—Magic Ritual (I), Treewalking (D), Woodlore (I).

Languages: Elvish, Glantrian, Thyatian, Orc (Tharian), Goblin (High Yazar & Doth), Hobgoblin (Hutai), Kobold (Cruth/Black Hill Dialects), Hill Giant.

1007 AC, Flaurmont 23:

Following a steady increase in the monstrous and malevolent activity near the Bad Magic Points, a Beholder appears today in the area of Thornbush, wreaking havoc throughout the forest. The increased level of twisted magic is a consequence of Atzanteotl's entropic magic.

Xrathpack, a powerful beholder, and many other monsters are lured into the area by Xatapechtli, using the spiders around Thornbush as sly and dangerous minions. The local imps grow in number due to the chaos, and also accelerate the growth and birth of new and more spiders. The beholder reveling in this chaos, desires to propagate.

1007 AC, Flaurmont 28:

Talyn Grunalf, continues searching for the exact source of pain felt by the Trees of Life. Leaving a tower repository just north of Thornbush, she stumbles upon Xrathpack. Talyn's fright of Beholders almost causes her missteps to be her demise. If not for the actions of old Treant Doak, venturing into the area for the same reasons, Talyn would have surely met her doom. They barely escape, with Doak's use of animate trees keeping Xrathpack at bay.

1007 AC, Yarthmont 7:

On this night, King Oberon of the Fairy Court decides to leave the twisted forest, heading through the Pixy-circles to Redstone on the Isle of Dawn, where there is already a fairy settlement. A small group of fairies and most centaurs will

resettle in nearby Darokin awaiting the forest's return to health. The good magic points have now lost their magic and collapse inward. The bad magic points expand and become more powerful.

1007 AC, Yarthmont 19:

A party of adventurers stumbles upon a small elvish community, finding the inhabitants have been cruelly slaughtered. Malicious monsters escaped from Thornbush are deemed responsible for the carnage; however, the massacre is the work of a small band of Shadow Elves. In the following months similar attempts to annihilate isolated Alfheim communities will be carried out.

That night Engledoc pervades the dreams of the adventuring party's druid, imparting a simple message; "Mistrust your observations"

1007 AC, Yarthmont 20:

The now wary druid casts a "Speak with the Dead" before leaving the village and discovers the assassins weren't monsters, but a party of elves. The druid is unable to ascertain what manner of elves were the murderers, but soon after relating his discovery to Alfheim's military commanders, fear and suspicion of invading Shadow Elves spreads throughout Alfheim.

1007 AC, Klarmont 16:

Jorodrin Feadiel, Treekeeper of clan Feadiel, and his assistants perform a ceremony devised over the last few

Favoured Spells: Talyn abhors lethal and fire-based spells. Level I: Command Word, Charm Person, Faerie Fire, Faerie Lights, Longstride. Level II: Entangle, Invisibility, Mirror Image, Silence, Warp Wood, Web. Level III: Call Lightning, Fly, Hold Animal, Hold Person, Protection from Normal Missiles. Level IV: Charm Monster, Confusion, Fear, Growth of Plants, Hallucinatory Terrain. Level V: Control Temperature 10' Radius, Control Winds, Feeblemind, Telekinesis, Teleport. Level VI: Anti-Animal Shell, Anti-Magic Shell, Cure Serious Wounds, Lower Water, Pass Plant, Stone to Flesh.

Magic Items: Talyn has Leather Armor +2, Quarterstaff +1, A Ring of Fire Resistance, and Silver Torc of Protection +2.

Clan Items access to; Treekeeper staff of wizardry (has nature spells; Thornstrike (Magic Missile variant for 8d6+8 damage), Faerie Fire(Lvl 1), Entangle, Invisibility, Bioluminescence (variant of Continual Light), Warp Wood, Web (Lvl 2), Growth of Plants, Obscure, Summon Animals (Lvl 4), Plant Door (Lvl 5). Control weather (Lvl 6), further equal to normal Staff of Wizardry, 31 charges left, recharges 1 charge per week if placed in Tree of Life. Can only be used by Treekeepers.

Faith; Patron, Ilsundal.

Dislikes: Violence, Sport, Orcs, Trolls, & Goblins.

Likes: Exotic Fruits (Banana, Pineapple), Chocolatl, Elegant Jewelry, Foreign Shoes

(Especially Ylari Sandals & Peshwari Chappals), & Laelia Orchids.

Fears: Beholders, Bargdas, & Fire.

Additional Notes: Talyn has all of Clan Grünalf's magical recourses at her disposal. Most often she also wears an elven cloak and boots when traveling far afield, and carries wands of healing (20 charges), persuasion (20 charges), and paralyzation (12 charges) to avert dangerous foes. In combat she is precatious, staying back and casting spells, aware of her importance within the clan. However; she isn't afraid to enter the fray when necessary, attacking with her Quarterstaff +1. Talyn has expert mastery with the weapon, from her years before taking role as Treekeeper; leaving Alfheim once every five years to train with a Master in Selenica, to keep this skill relevant. Talyn's magical silver torc is actually a gift from Princess Carlolina of Erewan in Glantri. Presented to her after saving a diplomatic envoy and his entourage from certain death. The torc is decorated with bronze filigree which has heavily oxidized in Alfheim's humid climate, giving the entire torc a verdigris tone. The bronze seemingly glowing with magical energy.

Talyn and Perfynn's relationship is barely two decades old, despite having known each other close to a century. As of yet, Talyn and Perfynn have no children, though that may change.

months¹, uprooting their Tree of Life, yet keeping its roots in the encompassing soil. By now all plants, trees, and most animals have already died, except fungi and Hometrees. Yet the number of monsters has increased; and the Trees of Life are nearing death.

1007 AC, Klarmont 23:

The Tree of Life's uprooting ceremony successful, Alfheim's Treekeepers are aware of perhaps being able to save their Trees of Life from the strange disease.

1007 AC, Felmont 1:

King Doriath, General Gilfronden, Captain Brightsword and their most trusted advisers meet in Elleromyr to plan the flight from Alfheim. During the council, evidence is revealed about the Shadow Elves moving stealthily thru the twisted forest. Captain Brightsword rises and vows to personally slay any known Shadow Elf.

1007 AC, Felmont 13:

Captain Brightsword is narrowly missed by arrows while patrolling the forest. The elves identify the arrows as coming from Clan Chossum, long suspected of sheltering Shadow Elves. Brightsword decides to press for Desnae and confront the Chossum Clanmaster. This is not a bungled attempt to assassinate Brightsword, but a way to lure him into Desnae.

¹ Since 28 Sviftmont

1007 AC, Felmont 16:

Clanmaster Carlisan privately meets Brightsword. Managing to cast charm person, Carlisan puts the young Captain under his control, assuring Brightsword the clan is not sheltering Shadow Elves. Carlisan asks Brightsword allow a famed and trusted adventurer of clan Chossum to join his patrolling party. Now Brightsword, General Gilfronden's biggest threat, is under Shadow Elves control. Carlisan knows the spell effect will not last, so he plants another Shadow Elf on Brightsword's path, tasked with casting a charm person on Brightsword every morning.

1007 AC, Felmont 28:

Radiant General Garafaele Galeifel orders Starlight Legions I-III to deploy below Alfheim. The Shadow Elves are now preparing for the final phase of the invasion. Wood imps collaborate with the Shadow Elves quest to conquer Alfheim.

1007 AC, Fyrmont 7:

King Doriath and General Gilfronden meet elvish members of the DDC¹ in Alfheim Town today. They discuss

¹ **DDC** = Darokin Diplomatic Corps. Today's DDC has a number of responsibilities, including; maintaining good relations with all of Darokin's neighbors, resolving disputes between neighbors especially if Darokin is caught in the middle, and negotiating trade agreements of all types, both within and without Darokin. The DDC, its methods, leadership, and role in Darokin society is discussed at length in Gazetteer 11 TSR 9250 The Republic of Darokin.

Perfynnn Grunalf

Captain of the Guard of Clan Grunalf

History: To most, it would seem as if Perfynnn Grunalf has led an unremarkable life. After his initial twenty years of youth, he spent the next forty learning the ways of the



elven forester, and shortly thereafter began a storied career in Alfheim's armed forces. First serving with distinction at The Sump & Weir, and after serving in nearly every Alfheim post over the next three hundred years, until finally making his way home. Tasked as Captain of the Guard, a job that is first and foremost protecting the Clanmaster of Clan Grunalf, Perfynnn has found it to be one of his most difficult charges in his three-hundred year career. For Durifern Widefarer, a name aptly given, refuses to allow Perfynnn to do his assigned duty. Durifern often wandering off into the wilds alone. So Perfynnn has instead taken up being defender and protector of Ainsun, and the Grunalf clan members residing there.

Utmost among them, Perfynnn has come to respect Talyn Grunalf, steadfast custodian of the Tree of Life; and not unlike himself, thrust into the impossible undertaking of having to occasionally deal with Durifern. Yet over the course of Talyn's tenure, the

two have come to mutual understanding, which has slowly matured into a romantic relationship. Both feeling Clan Grunalf might be better off with Perfynn as Clanleader, and Durifern as Counsel.

Personality: Though boisterous in his youth, Perfynn is now able to stand toe to toe with Durifern's gruff demeanor, except when it comes to Talyn. Though a soldier through and through, Talyn has awakened a different side within him; one of intelligence and curiosity. Perfynn is amazed at Talyn's ability to still marvel over the mysteries of the forest; and in turn he has begun to ask relevant questions, and carry on meaningful dialogue with her about the Canolbarth. Ones even filled with full sentences. A chore his superior is evidently unwilling to master!

Appearance: At 352 years old, Perfynn is the typical 5'6" height for a male elf, yet brawny, weighing 168 pounds. He wears his wavy chestnut hair to his shoulders, usually unbound. Perfynn's golden eyes seem cold and emotionless, until viewed in Talyn's presence. Like most Alfheim warriors, his fair complexion bares a light tan. Though in the past, almost always encountered in his enchanted leather armor, complete with wooden shield strapped to his arm; these days Perfynn's tastes are changing, Talyn's influence at work. Now seen sporting brown trousers and flowing long-sleeved singlets with lace up fronts. Perfynn is apparently trying to appear more Clanmaster, and less soldier these days.

relocating the Trees of Life on Darokinian soil with a mixed Darokin-Alfheim honour guard protecting them. This guard becomes known as the Root Watch. Their agreement also allows elves to freely cross Darokin should they need to abandon their homeland. King Doriath implores the DDC keep the utmost secrecy concerning the meeting.

1007 AC, Fyrmont 14:

Treekeepers from the seven major clans meet today in Feador to discuss the Trees of Life's relocation. Treekeepers from clan Long Runner exhibit a new spell masking a Tree of Life's aura, making it appear as a normal tree, thus disguising it from hostile eyes. By now all clans, excepting the Mealidil and Long Runner, have performed the ceremony and uprooted their Tree of Life. Still a bit perplexed, they are now ready to immigrate and relocate the dying Trees of Life in Southern and Eastern Darokin.

The curtains of fog surrounding the cursed province of Avonleigh¹ dissipate. Heroes enter and successfully dispatch Morgoroth,

¹ **The hidden Province of Avonleigh in Darokin**, is based upon the TSR 9494 AD&D 2nd Ed. Ravenloft Audio adventure "Light in the Belfry". Adventure map redrawn and adjusted to a Mystara style hex map, and squeezed in between Dolak, Selenica and the Southeastern corner of Alfheim by author. This domain was created a few years after the Elves arrived here (± 800 BC). Morgoroth was the son of Moorkroft I, the original Elven nemesis from the Sylvan Realm. With the creation of magical fog bank over this realm in 775 BC by the Elves, with assumed Immortal help; with no way of escape, several Doulakki

but this allows many undead to leave the region and multiply. Darokin is astounded at what the fog obscured, yet welcomes the few hundred surviving great-great-grandchildren of the Doulakki.¹

1007 AC, Fyrmont 20:

Setting a precedence; Jorodrin Feadiel, Treekeeper of Clan Feadiel, guides its Tree of Life into Southeastern Darokin, outside the twisted Canolbarth Forest. Clan Feadiel is first to reposition its Tree of Life, and soon the other clans, excepting Clans Long Runner and Mealidil, will follow suit. The Trees will be placed in the most densely forested areas around Dolak or Dolos, though far enough away to not be further affected by the sickening. At least this is the Treekeeper's hope.

1007 AC, Ambyrmont 1:

The Clanmasters sadly resolve to leave their now dead beloved forest on the fifteenth of Ambyrmont. Beasthunter and Mealidan, Clanmasters of the Long Runner and Mealidil Clans respectively, acrimoniously disagree on leaving the forest; and warn leaving the forest can only harm the Trees of Life, and

families were also imprisoned within the barrier. They barely survived, but all people mentioned in this adventure are descendants of these Doulakki families, and the few visitors ending up here once in awhile. A [map of the Baronial Domain of Avonleigh](#) is available online.

¹ **The Doulakki;** See "[History of Eykaivial and the Dwarfgate Mountains Region](#)" by Sheldon Morris, Aaron Nowack, Geoff Gander, and Thorfinn Tait.

DMing Notes: Perfynnn will not usually be the first Grunalf clan member characters meet. His eventual appearance might take place after being rebuffed by Durifern, or being referred by Talyn. He is mildly tolerant of other races, and even has some affection for druids and foresters, having met a few in the past. Though he enthusiastically attempts to recruit young elves into the army. Characters not of the clan, and lingering too long, might find themselves being escorted toward The Sump & Weir to report for duty!

Combat Notes: E10th level; AC 2; hp 54; MV 120' (40'); #AT 2 (Attack Class F); D 1d8+t (Elven Longsword +2, EX Mastery); Save E10; ML 11; AL L(N); ST 16, IN 12, WI 10, DX 14, CO 16, CH 12, CM 14.

Abilities & Skills: Forest Survival (W), Knowledge of the Canolbarth (I), Knowledge of The Sump & Weir (I), Military Tactics (I), Riding (D), Tracking (I), Treewalking (D).

Languages: Elvish, Darokin, Thyatian, Orc (Tharian), Gnoll (Gnollistani), Goblin (High Doth), Hobgoblin (Hutai), Kobold (Black Hill Dialect), Stone Giant..

Favoured Spells: Level I: Magic Missile, Protection from Evil, Shield. Level II: Detect Evil, Detect Invisible, Web. Level III: Fly, Lightning Bolt, Water Breathing. Level IV: Charm Monster, Growth of Plants, Ice Storm. Level V: Cloudkill, Wall of Stone.

Magic Items: Perfynnn has Leather Armor +2, Shield +2, and Elven Longsword +2,

Elven Cloak, Boots of Traveling and Leaping.

Faith: Ilsundal.

Dislikes: Incompetence, Capitulation, Orcs, Trolls, & Goblins. *Likes:* Weaponry, Smoked Venison, Ylari Pistachios, and recently finer clothes.

Fears: Dragons & Shadow Elves.

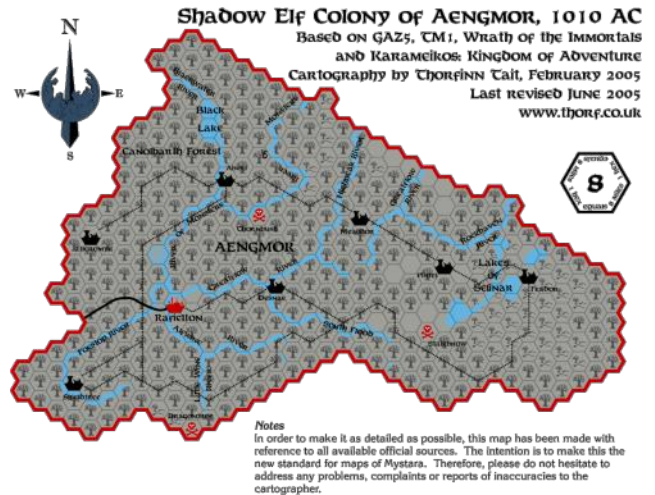
Additional Notes: Perfynn prefers to charge into the fight with his Elven Longsword +2, only withdrawing to use his bow after taking serious wounds. He wears Leather Armor +2, and carries a Shield +2, giving him an AC of 2. Additionally he wears an Elven Cloak, and wears Boots of Traveling and Leaping.

Perfynn has no living relatives among Clan Grunalf. His younger sister joined the Long Runners, and a younger brother long ago left the forest, never to be heard from again.

Perfynn has Expert Mastery with the Elven Longsword; a “gift” from Redsword Truetalker, as Redsword allowed a younger Perfynn to travel with him to Alfheim Town and train with a master when Perfynn was under his command at Shield Tree. The two have a mutual respect for one another, and Perfynn feels Redsword is the finest warrior in Alfheim, thinking Gilfronden’s posting as General of Alfheim’s Army was a mistake on Doriath’s part.

Perfynn and Talyn’s relationship is barely two decades old, despite having known each other close to a century. As of yet,

inevitably corrupt the elven way of life. They have yet to uproot their Trees of Life, being firmly convinced leaving is the wrong decision.



1007 AC, Ambyrmont 3:

King Doriath’s messengers reach the various Clanholds, bringing news of the evacuation. Old swords are honed, bows oiled and strung, and spellbooks memorized; preparing for what will most likely be a very dangerous journey. Clans Chossum, Red Arrow, and Feadiel, will head South to Karamelkos crossing Eastern Darokin and the Cruth Mountains; clans Erendyl, Mealidil, Grunalf, and Long Runner will head North to Wendar traversing the dangerous Broken Lands and hostile Ethengar. Alfheim elves everywhere, pack their belongings; loading carts and wagons hitched to beasts of burden. The caravans led by heroes astride Elven War Horses.

The young gold dragon Raspaert collects her possessions and departs for the Five Shires. Feeling insecure and unable to assist curing

the forest's disease, once sheltered in the Shires, she begins the Dragon Circle of Knowledge¹ to help find a way to solve the forest's illness.

1007 AC, Ambyrmont 4:

Clanmasters Beasthunter and Mealidil meet today in Mealidor to discuss the message received yesterday. Both leaders are still firmly convinced remaining in their homeland is the right decision, but must admit the forest has grown increasingly dark, dangerous, and inhospitable. Despite prolonged research they are unable to find a way of saving the dying Trees of Life, yet they decide to stay and continue researching until the spring.

Meanwhile, Xatapechtli begins a bizarre magical experiment on spiders around Thornbush. He requests help from several powerful Shadow Elves, but infuriated by their lack of enthusiasm and commitment, Xatapechtli dismisses them. Atzanteotl understands how to solve the impasse, sending more Shadow Elves devoted to him.

1007 AC, Ambyrmont 10:

General Garafaele receives reports about the Alfheim elves preparing to mobilize and orders Starlight Legions to deploy along the tunnels under the Canolbarth forest. Knowing the surface elves will flee the twisted forest on the fifteenth of Ambyrmont, the Radiant General urges his troops advance to further destabilize them.

¹ **Dragon Circles** - see [“Dragons in the D&D game's Known World”](#) by Bruce Heard.

Perfynn and Talyn have no children, though that may soon change. Perfynn being a soldier through and through kind of takes care of him being a strict, and “work-comes-first” person. He will take an important place in the actions of the Grunalf clan from 1200 AC on.

1007 AC, Ambyrmont 15:

In a move that shocks the Darokinians, yet not the well-informed DDC, the elves of Alfheim flee their country. Several long queues made of thousand of carts, horses, and elves on foot dot the Darokinian landscape; departing like living tendrils from the twisted forest and either head northwest towards Corunglain or southeast to Selenica. Only about half the elves from Clans Long Runner and Mealidil flee with King Doriath; the others are determined to defend their villages, Clanmasters, and Trees of Life.

Talyn Grunalf and Doak, the old Treant from the Emerlas, meet in Farshire², where the fleeing Centaurs and several Fairies have temporarily taken up residence. Talyn has put faith in the other Treekeepers to uproot the Grunalf Tree of Life. Her in depth research is of greater importance. Memories bringing her back to a boisterous time spent

² **Farshire, Darokin**; A forested region on the Northern side of the Cruth Mountains separating Darokin and the Five Shires. A peaceful settlement of both humans and halflings, and welcoming to the Alfheim refugees.

long ago with Engledoc. Since Engledoc's recent disappearance, his final haunting thoughts still roam her mind, spurring her toward action with a single thought; "What if he knew...?".

1007 AC, Ambyrmont 17:

During the night well armed Shadow Elven troops enter the twisted forest skulking out of tunnels, quickly overwhelming the small bands of elves staying to defend their homeland; however, the Shadow Elves must retreat before dawn, because they aren't yet acclimated to the sunlight. The fiercest fighting takes place around Pintel and Mealidor, but thanks to their superior numbers, the Shadow Elves manage victory before dawn. Before bolting north, the few survivors from Clans Long Runner and Mealidil manage to cast the unique spell disguising their Trees of Life. (See Fyrmont 14). A small group of Shadow Elves, equipped with magical amulets allowing them to ignore the effects of sunlight, fights their way toward Alfheim Town, only to find abandoned buildings. The Legions, as planned find almost no resistance invading the forest, yet now their main obstacle is adapting to the daylight; though the darkened forest will make this easier.

1007 AC, Ambyrmont 18:

Darokinian and elvish authorities receive news of the invasion. In Darokin City remaining troops are put on high alert. Charles Mauntea urges the DDC to get in touch with these unfamiliar invaders. In

Corunglain messengers from the Long Runner and Mealidil Clanmasters, prompt King Doriath to send back some troops to defend those left behind. The King; however, only allows courageous adventurers from both clans to go back to Alfheim to return and collect news about the invasion. Long seen as an elven legend outside Alfheim, Darokinians are shocked to learn Shadow Elves really exist. Darokin never considered Alfheim a credible threat. Their armed forces greatly depleted after war against the Master, yet Darokin would now be completely unable to stop an attack coming from the very centre of the Republic. Diplomatic solutions are once again Darokin's only hope.

1007 AC, Ambyrmont 28:

A lavish party is thrown tonight at Atzanteotl's mansion in Pandius to toast Ilsundal's utter defeat. Hel, Alphaks and Rafiel attend. The invasion of Alfheim was a major stroke against Ilsundal. Of course Rafiel must attend the party to avoid Atzanteotl's suspicions. Despite not hating Ilsundal, Rafiel must continue this deception of Entropy.

As of yet Rafiel is unaware several Shadow Elf Feathered Serpents and their families have adopted Azanteotl's doctrines along with their leader Xatapechtli. Suffering greatly from this major stroke, Ilsundal alters his appearance, reflecting a change of ways and triggering another train of thought and ideas.

1007 AC, Sviftmont 9:

General Garafaele takes possession of the city in the name of King Telemon and renames it Rafielton. By now his legions have conquered the whole region, and in places they even occupied the Northern Darokinian borderlands. Now celebrating their victory, the Shadow Elves soon have to start the hard task of rebuilding. Garafaele plans to destroy the wooden buildings and Ironwood wall surrounding the city, to replace them with more familiar stone buildings and a solid stone wall.

1007 AC, Sviftmont 17:

In the square named after him, King Telemon renames the conquered Canolbarth Forest to Aengmor, after a legendary city they once inhabited, then he crowns his daughter, the Princess Tanadaleyo, as Governor of Aengmor. General Garafaele is named Warlord of Aengmor. In a long sermon Porphyriel announces the prophecies of Rafiel have finally been realized, the Shadow Elves now having a place upon the surface where they can live under the sun among green trees (or so they think). Meanwhile in their underground cities other shamans are preaching similar tales to the entire Shadow Elf population. Everyone is joyous in victory. The ambitious Tanadaleyo has long dreamed of being Princess of Alfheim. In conquering Alfheim Garafaele has finally succeeded where his predecessors failed; gaining an exalted place in Shadow Elf history. Long coveting the Canolbarth Forest, Telemon now has it, and without

help from the meddling shamans!!! Porphyriel is blissful because she can claim the conquest of Alfheim is Rafiel's will, thus strengthening her people's faith, which had waned after centuries of privations and unfulfilled promises.

The Shadow Elves enthusiastically welcome new Crystal growth on the surface, and the effects of existing crystals gradually become stronger.

Engledoc's spirit sees all that is happening, but cleverly turns his attention towards lower Aengmor; the Shadow Elves' legendary city, hearing so many of the Shadow Elves rekindle their hope of taking back their ancient city after the conquest of Alfheim. This ancient city, spoken of so highly, as being one of the other major promises Rafiel seemed to have made. If rediscovered, perhaps Engledoc could entice the Shadow Elves towards this ancient city, leaving Alfheim, to be reconquered.

1008 AC Spring:

As the spring thaw opens the mountain passes, many of the elven clans of Alfheim finally reach Karamaikos. Several Shadow Elves venture towards Glantri city, secretly followed by Engledoc. Through their ramblings he deciphered they intended to investigate a rumor heard of an ancient city occupied by humanoids hidden in the Broken Lands.

A *mage* named Angus McClintock, is giving unusual lectures at Glantri's Great School of Magic, about a society of civilized humanoids. He enthusiastically speaks of their ancient city named Oenkmarr. Oenkmarr,

sounds all too familiar to ignore, seeming very similar to Aengmor, for both Engledoc and the Shadow Elves. The lecture, although interesting, resolves nothing, causing the Shadow Elves to prompt Angus for more information. When cornered and intimidatingly questioned by the Shadow Elves, Angus proves to be more than a match for the Shadow Elves, easily dispatching them. Now being more cautious, and uninterested in more “enthusiasts”, Angus teleports away. Engledoc touches the mage as he casts the spell, traveling with him unnoticed, swept up in the wake of the spell. After a few days of investigation, Engledoc discovers this location must be the humanoid city of Oenkmar. Venturing along the great pyramid, he notices the all too familiar disguised shadow elves, studying the old elvish runes and scriptures on the stones. The scriptures mention the city’s name being Aengmor, and tells of the days before the elves were forced to abandon the city, due some great disaster. Engledoc then fades through the surrounding rocks travelling to the surface to locate the cities relative position. Once topside he finds several passages leading to the city below.

1009 AC Fall:

The second group of Alfheim elves leaves the Northern Glantrian Mountains and enters the nation of Wendar. Rad, Rafiel, and Rathanos finish construction of the Doomsday weapon underneath Glantri. Immediately after hearing Thyatis has conducted a peace treaty with Alphatia, Rad activates the device. Minutes later an enormous storm forms over the Alphatian capital city of Sundsvall. Spellcasters all over Mystara, quickly

discover all forms of magic no longer function. Across the world, members of magical races, such as elves, grow ill and lose their strength (ST -5). Then, after hours of meteorological abuse, earthquakes begin rumbling across the Alphatian continent, and within the span of a few hours, most of the continent sinks beneath the cold dark waters of the Sea of Dawn. Magic does not return to the world for a full week.

Thankfully, the Alfheim refugees have replanted all Trees of Life in healthy ground, no longer needing magic to mask their presence. This effect lasts for a week, enabling the last Alfheim elves to reach their brethren. Talyn, adversely suffers from the effects, her strength slowly falling. So frail now, she nearly succumbs. Magic having all but vanished, her only hope lay upon the healing skills of the centaur’s herbalist. Talyn still thinks all of this has come about because of the Canolbarth’s corruption. Among the weakened Shadow Elves, feelings of doubt take root in the minds of many. This is a first sign showing perhaps their actions were flawed.

1010 AC Felmont 14:

An informal band of Rockhome adventurers, are in a scrap with humanoid forces in the Broken Lands, training their new members to fight, when one of them stumbles upon a cave opening. The dwarves go in after him and find a pure vein of gold, but then encounter forces from the underground city of Oenkmar. Secretly among them is the ghost of Engledoc, trying to make a layout of the area. They escape with their

lives, making a beeline for Rockhome, pursued by Engledoc. The dwarves have indeed discovered gold in the surrounding bedrock, which sparks a dual invasion of dwarven soldiers and miners intent on destroying the humanoid city, and the threat it poses to the civilized world, and afterwards stripping gold deposits from the Broken Lands.

Engledoc hopes this leads to the discovery of Aengmor, and if the Shadow Elves discover the Dwarves have occupied their fabled city, will send troops from the Canolbarth in an attempt to reclaim it. Thus leaving the Canolbarth less defended.

1010 AC FYRMONT 1:

Summer strikes hard in the new nation of Aengmor. Without Alfheim's elven weather magic, the area suffers a great drought. For the first time in many years, spring rainfall has been sparse. By this date, no rain has fallen in weeks. The forest becomes arid and small tracts of transformed Hometrees are beginning to die. Princess Tanadaleyo decides to send a diplomatic mission to the Elven communities of Norwold, apparently because they have no ties with Alfheim, as far as the Shadow Elves know. Should the mission fail, the diplomatic envoys will have to return by way of Wendar and seek help there, even though Alfheim elves now inhabiting Wendar will naturally seek to poison the Wendarian minds against the Shadow Elves. Aengmor is now forced to interact with foreigners as other nations do—with diplomacy instead of just invasion.

Now fully recovered, Talyn sallies forth with her ragtag group of companions: **Doak**; old Treant of the Emerlas; **Chavas**; female Centaur healer; **Pratiwass**; Pixy warrior; **Shrepsy**; Sprite sorceress; and **Hesshrouu**; sagacious Hsiao cleric. They begin a lengthy winding trek through the remains of the Canolbarth searching for clues. In the upcoming months they will slowly make a counterclockwise journey around the Canolbarth

1010 AC AMBYRMONT 2:

Aengmor, laying entirely within the borders of Darokin, sends emissaries to appear before the rulers of Darokin. They assert Aengmor has extended its borders over the sparsely occupied strip of Darokin territory surrounding it, and give the people of Darokin three months to evacuate all settlements within this borderland—including the city of Selenica. The Shadow Elves threaten if the leaders of Darokin refuse, they will blight every tree in Darokin, then adapting their spells to blight grain crops as well. Most unrealizing the Shadow Elves demand is as hollow as Mystara; as the spells used against Alfheim's trees were specifically tailored to affect the magically-enhanced oaks native to the Canolbarth forest.

1010 AC SVIFTMONT 5:

The party of Aengmorian emissaries reach Norwold and a small elven community in the deep southern woods. The Shadow Elves recount the situation and ask for help in the development of spells to save the Canolbarth.

1010 AC EIRMONT 21:

Darokin, having investigated Aengmor's claim, calls their bluff, saying that they refuse to abandon lands long belonging to Darokin, declaring borders will remain fixed. However; to their considerable surprise, the Darokin diplomats extend a hand in friendship to the Shadow Elves, also reaffirming that the elves of Aengmor may conduct trade through Selenica and all of Darokin. The Shadow Elves are baffled by this entirely reasonable attitude.

1011 AC SVIFTMONT 1:

Despite the initial promise of a wet spring, drought continues to plague Aengmor. Yet hope arrives from Norwold, where elves have conducted magical experiments to save the trees of the Canolbarth. Eager to test their laboured resolutions, the returning elves promptly cast the new spells. Soon after, a fine mist moistens the forest, yet lasts only a few minutes before the clouds disperse once more.

1012 AC KALDMONT:

The wood imps', who established a court in 1009 AC, have assembled every new moon, engaging in violent orgies around their sacred Stalkbrow. Afterwards, the imps travel on spider mounts in an anarchic and carnivalesque procession to Lolach-Lomod, formerly Dreamland. The Shadow Elves feel extremely uncomfortable with the imps' chaotic lives. The imps simply reply that their way is "the way of the wood". The

problem; however, is young Shadow Elves are starting to emulate this behavior, leading highly scandalous lifestyles and frowning upon the doctrines of Rafiel. The imps are slowly becoming a real nuisance for to the Shadow Elf elite. But since the bad magic points are stronger, the wood imps are becoming quite powerful in Aengmor - and a crusade against them might not go as intended. Besides their spiders, the imps have other strong allies; including the evil Treant, Travestis whose patron Nyx has set him on the path toward Immortality, and is in fact starting the process of populating the dead forest with her own hordes of Evil Plants and Foul Folk. Among them; several Hags; Dark Dryads¹, Feral Satyrs² and several Redcaps still haunting old Elven and fairy buildings and monuments. Additionally, Undead from the cursed province of Avonleigh are found wandering into the corrupted Canolbarth.

1012 AC VATERMONT 15:

Engledoc finds a Shadow Elven scouting group, and stealthily influencing their path of

¹ **Dark Dryads** are the embodiment of dead trees in Aengmor, being very pale and ghost-like; having a Dryad winter white, or grey hair. They are extremely solemn, almost sad beings; their main weapon being their famine curse, which they use to corrupt and destroy all surrounding life.

² **Feral Satyrs** are even more beastlike than Fauns; having large horns, which gives them a demon-like appearance. Both Feral Satyrs and Dark Dryads will be more thoroughly explained in the upcoming chapter of my Monster Manual Compilation: Fairykin and Weefolk.

movement leads them to a small outcropping overlooking Oenkmar.

One of them is sent away to carry the thrilling news to Tanadaleyo, Radiant Princess of the Shadow Elves and governor of Aengmor. He speaks of the fabled city of Aengmor's discovery, thought destroyed more than twenty-three centuries ago. Aengmor, now called Oenkmar, is currently inhabited by horrible humanoids, and is presently besieged by the even more repulsive dwarves. Tanadaleyo consults with the Radiant general, both agreeing Aengmor must be reclaimed. Before the day's end, messengers are dispatched to the City of the Stars, bringing King Telemon news of the discovery. Aengmor's Shadow Elves prepare for a holy war.

In the upcoming weeks, Dwarves followed by Shadow Elves attack Oenkmar. The Shadow Elves first attack, afterwards being repelled by the humanoids. Atzanteotl soon lost interest in the occupying Humanoids placing his interest in the more formidable Shadow Elves, whom progressively forsake Rafiel in favor of the Dark Lord. Atzanteotl's most devoted disciple is Xatapechtli, along with his Shadow Elf spies the "Feathered Serpents". Most of whom have been quietly diverting young Shadow Elves away from Rafiel.

1012 AC AMBYRMONT 16:

The Shadow Elves break Oenkmar's defenses, driving the humanoids out, feeling no remorse or pity for the fleeing of the humanoids. The humanoids having little chance of escape, is no concern to them,

most being thrown from the battlements into the lava pool below. This evil behavior in fact is instigated by Xatapechtli and his "Feathered Serpents",

Angus McClintock, realizing there is nothing he can do to stop the destruction of his beloved city; flees Oenkmar and returns to Glantri.

1012 AC SVIFTMONT 1:

Kanafasti, royal wizard in the City of the Stars, receives an unusual visitor in his makeshift laboratory in Aengmor's Citadel. Teleporting into the room while Kanafasti is alone, and before the Shadow Elf wizard can cast any spells, the visitor holds up a weathered, wrinkled hand and speaks the Shadow Elven word for peace. Intrigued, Kanafasti beckons his guest to have a seat, inviting him to state his business. The visitor introduces himself as Felestrator, a Shadow Elf wanderer sent away from the City of the Stars nearly a century ago, and reveals a community of wanderers—nearly a hundred residents—have been living in Oenkmar, and have much knowledge to share with their Shadow Elf brethren. Managing to remain unnoticed among the humanoids with the use of magic and disguise, old Shadow Elves not looking markedly different from old humanoids. Felestrator reveals to Kanafasti they have substantial knowledge to share with their Shadow Elf brethren.

Dedicating themselves to learning as much as they could of the sacred city of Aengmor; their knowledge could prove invaluable to Kanafasti—provided he

dares to disobey the Immortal Rafiel's prohibition concerning contact between wanderers and the general Shadow Elf population. Kanafasti, himself a mere two years from becoming a wanderer, promises to do all he can to integrate the wanderers into Shadow Elven society here in Aengmor.

Unknown to Kanafasti all wanderers in Oenkmor have in time discovered ancient teachings of Atzanteolt in the Great Pyramid of Aengmor and have forsaken the Faith of Rafiel. This is another step in Atzanteotl's bold plan.

1012 AC Sviftmont 28:

Princess Tanadaleyo informs the foreign ambassadors within Rafielton the Shadow Elves have reclaimed the legendary city of Aengmor, and accordingly, the lower broken lands now belong to them as well. Tanadaleyo assures the ambassadors, merchant caravans shall be allowed to traverse the trade routes through the broken lands, as they always have—but any incursions into the lower broken lands, will be dealt with most harshly. Dwarves in particular, will be attacked on sight if discovered in the caves and passageways surrounding the sacred city of Aengmor.

With Aengmor's rediscovery, Xatapechtli learns still more while exploring the surrounding area, and continues his diabolical experiments in secrecy. In a short timespan Xatapechtli has become extremely powerful, and is certain his rise is gift from Atzanteotl.

1012 AC Eirmont 20:

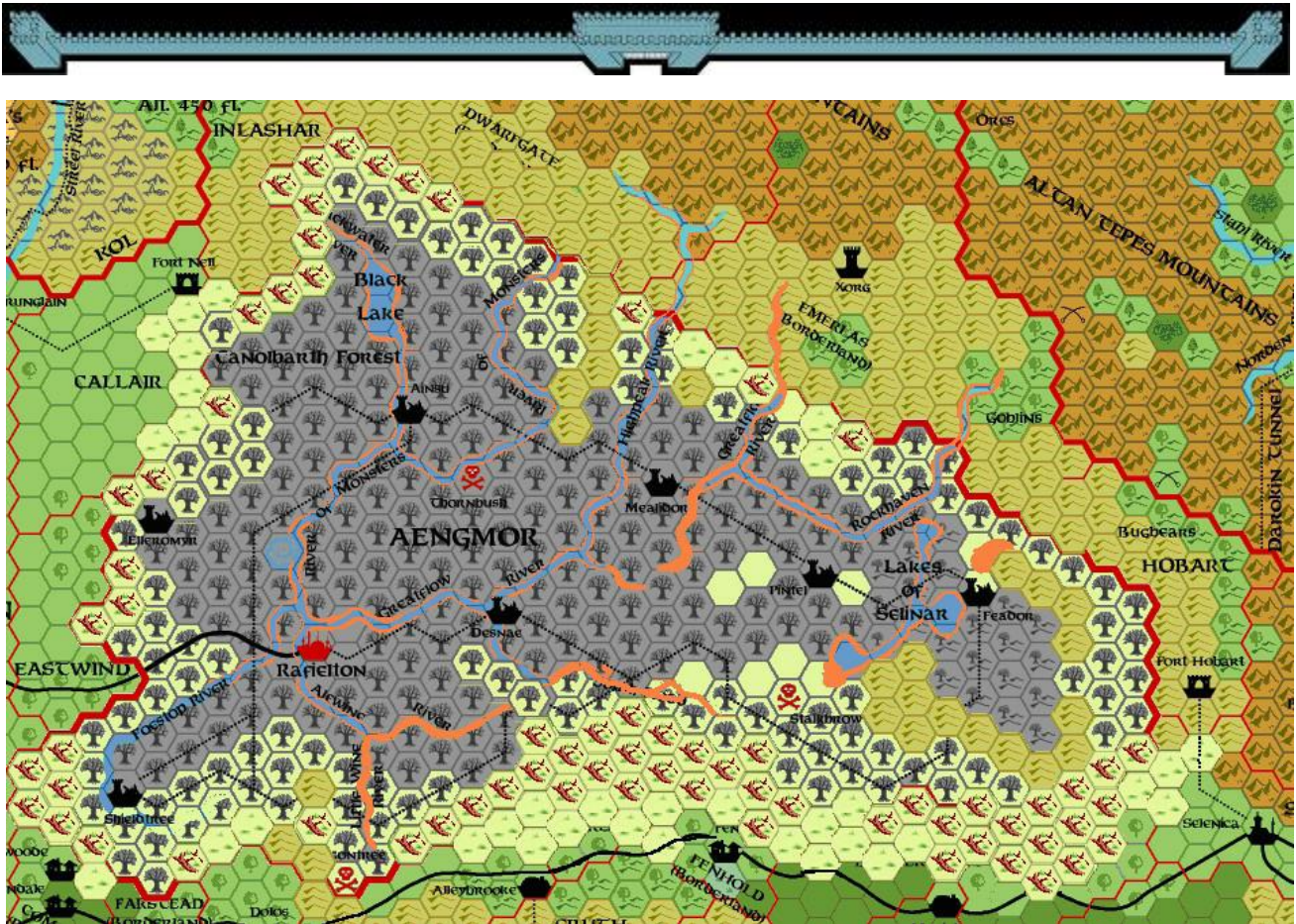
Despite the Shadow Elf mages recent successes with weather magic, the twisted trees of Canolbarth continue to sicken and die. The Canolbarth's perimeter is giving way to grasslands, and Aengmor's borders are rapidly shrinking. Princess Tanadaleyo has come to regret the magic used to twist the trees of Canolbarth into parodies of their former selves. The twisted "blight oaks" do not have the strength to resist drought. Shadow Elf immigrants have been disillusioned by Canolbarth. Growing up hearing stories of how one day the beautiful Canolbarth forest, with its green-leaved trees dappled by sunlight, would belong to them, many now believe that dream seems as twisted as the trees themselves.

1013 AC Spring:

The great influx of Shadow Elven colonists has brought fierce resistance, the humanoids not being easily driven from their territory. Shadow Elf warriors frequently patrol the underground passageways, seeking out obstinate humanoids. Combat has occurred on the surface as well, for the Shadow Elves are determined to drive all humanoids from the Eastern Broken Lands.

Thousands of Hobgoblins and Orcs pour into the northern Dwarfgate foothills and the Emerlas. This horde stumbles upon Trolls bereaved by the Dragon Kordarg's slaying, with the ensuing encounter not ending peaceably. The Trolls having already lost their mighty leader, after attacking Dorneryll

The Fall and Rise of the Canolbarth



Canolbarth Forest, 1013 AC. The Great Drought and lack of rain, are a boon for forest fires, thus ushering the rapid deterioration of the Canolbarth's borders. The remaining area predominantly consists of dead tree trunks; often harvested by locals for building, the price of wood falling by fifty percent; and steppeland. Aengmor's political borders have also receded as Shadow Elves vacate the grasslands.

to strengthen their foothold, are pitted against the more organized Orcs in the region. As a consequence, Orcs from Xorg hear of their kin's struggle with the Trolls, and join the battle. Assaulted from two sides, after a three week battle, the Trolls and their Gnollish allies are defeated and enslaved. Sparse few have fled toward the Western Broken Lands. The Orcs; however, have also been greatly weakened, and most break into smaller tribes, settling within the region. The only humanoids truly benefiting from these events are the Bugbears in the east, having not participated in any of the battles. As such, they remain strong and

plunder the Western Canolbarth and the ruins in the hills. The bugbears even begin emulating some elven military structure. Bartziluth's Bugbear shamans recite prophecies claiming greatness awaits his followers.

Talyn is awakened by strange dreams one night. Visions of an old familiar face, warm and trusting; Engledoc. No words are spoken, but Talyn feels the great sensation of mutual trust and respect they once shared wash over her, now knowing she is on the right path with her research.

After having contemplated many scenarios to rid the Canolbarth of the Shadow Elves, aside from sending numerous elven heroes into the fray, Engledoc comes upon the idea to reawaken the Good Magic Points. Incorporately, Engledoc has often travelled to Limbo. Observing similarities between the affected regions in Limbo and the Canolbarth. Deeply analyzing these correlations, he soon discovered the magic used to corrupt the Canolbarth had allowed negative energy from Limbo to leach through many small portals around the region. Engledoc traveled to these gates, finding each was guarded by wights and wraiths, having alternate reflections existing in Limbo.¹

Soon after approaching, the trapped identities of the undead were stirred through magical triggers, immediately acting to locate the intruder. Taking several hours and all his spells, Engledoc nevertheless overpowers the undead minions. Severely weakened by their energy draining capabilities, he still manages to seal the gate. Traveling across Alfheim and Limbo, he salvages souls in Limbo and ghosts from the Prime Plane among Alfheim's slain warriors, banding them into an undead army. The cursed elves knowing to fail in this obligation, would cause cessation of their existence. No afterlife, rebirth or reincarnation, only an endless nothing. Yet with one notion they all agree. Engledoc's army of haunts travels from one gate to the next. Initially the victories come easily, but soon after Atzanteotl discovers half the smaller gates have already been closed by Engledoc's forces, he summons more powerful Nightstalkers and Nightwalkers

¹ **Limbo;** As explained by Bruce Heard's article on Undead in Dragon #180 and my "[Monster Manual](#)" compilation book Undead.

sentries to guard the most important gates leading to the Magic Points.

1013 AC Sviftmont 23:

Princess Tanadaleyo invites certain Alfheim refugees to visit Rafielton to discuss the future of Canolbarth Forest. The forest's perimeter has receded several miles, leaving stark, twisted corpses of the once-mighty oaks behind. The land is so parched, the merest spark could result in a roaring blaze, which would quickly consume the dead trees and underbrush. Over time, grasses blanket the blighted landscape. In this way, the forest has lost ground, acre by acre, mile by mile. There are no signs of this trend slowing, let alone reversing, despite the best efforts of the Shadow Elves and Elven mages from far-away Norwold, answering the Shadow Elves' cry for help three years ago.

The Alfheim elves are shocked to see how everything has changed. Gone are the elegant Home trees where they once lived in. Alfheim town—now Rafielton—is unrecognizable. The magic the Shadow Elves used to blight the great oaks has rendered the forest nearly uninhabitable. Without the spells of weather change the Great Canolbarth is dying.

1013 AC Winter:

Talyn and her unlikely party of heroes have almost circled the entire Canolbarth, reaching the Magic Point of Ironbark. Instantly aware of the ground's positive aura, Doak takes root, replenishing himself. Within two days, his brown leaves show the green

buds of new leaves. Talyn realizes the magic of nearby Ironbark is responsible; the Magic Point still emanating powerful energy. When they discover the small island of Ironbark, all plants seem to be young and rejuvenated. Together the party begins gathering clues, casting spells in order to understand the source, which Ironbark rapidly absorbs. The magical energy flowing somewhere else; where they do not know.

Engledoc's army of souls discovers waves of magical light emanating through the grey skies of Limbo¹, uncovering the first crucial major gate; the one linked to the Good Magic Point of Ironbark. Over two-and-a-half thousand elven souls approach the defending pair of Nightwalkers, Wights, Wraiths and a solitary Nightstalker. The battle is turbulent, as spirits are obliterated, but the elves extinguished, "die" with a smile...how great their sacrifice...for a greater good. Their sacrifice had unforeseen consequences. Ironbark, being the most powerful magic point, created by strains of combat magic becomes active....IN LIMBO!! From this moment onward, all undead powers become diminished. With each magical spell cast, each fallen Elven soul or even undead essence the powers of Ironbark grow stronger, as if feeding on the magic and energy of perished souls. As the last enemy falls, Ironbark's power is so great it reveals all other magic points and smaller magical locations. Engledoc then seals Ironbark's gate. All the surviving Elven souls cheer. Over

¹ **Magic Light;** This effect is similar to the Northern Lights, or Aurora Borealis. The light Engledoc sees is actually magic from Talyn and her ragtag companions. Both heroic groups are trying to resolve the issue, unknowing of the other, yet still aiding the other through their own acts.

the next thirty years, taking into account time moves differently in Limbo, Engledoc's army finds and closes the majority of the smaller dimensional ruptures leading into Limbo.

1013 AC Kaldmont 13:

Deep within the world's crust, Shadow Elf explorers from the City of the Stars finally make their way to the Hollow World's surface, eventually encountering the Schattenalfen.

1013 AC Kaldmont 16:

The Schattenalfen Queen converses with these exploring Shadow Elves, learning a great deal of history her race has forgotten. She agrees to open diplomatic ties with the City of Stars. Though the two divisions of the Shadow Elves do not like or trust one another, both recognize the ties that bind them— each realizing it may learn from the other.

Xatapechtli has also travelled to the Schattenalfen Lands, secretly learning more about Atzanteotl, and the Shadow Elves' forgotten past shared with this Immortal. Xatapechtli relates this knowledge to his Feathered Serpents. Slowly the Faith of Atzanteotl gains a secret but stronger foothold within Shadow Elven society. Rafael learns of the attrition of his followers, yet assumes it is only a small number of believers, deciding that at the moment, the Canolbarth takes precedence.

1013 AC Eirmont 16:

A delegation of Alfheim refugees returns to the Estate of Radlebb after negotiating with Princess Tanadaleyo in Rafielton, debating the fate of the Canolbarth Forest. They announce the Shadow Elves are contemplating a partnership to save the Canolbarth from further destruction.

1018 AC, VATERMONT 27:

Elven scholars, under the guidance of Talyn Grunalf and her companions, studying the Ironbark Magic Point notice new floral growth outside Ironbark's supposed bounds. This news creates a great sensation across the nation, as it is heralded as evidence the Canolbarth is recovering. Alone among the "Good" Magic Points in the Canolbarth, Ironbark has persisted despite the Shadow Elf sorceries warping the forest. Within Ironbark's borders, the forest has always remained healthy and vibrant, evidence of the powerful magics originally creating the Magic Point in the first place. New growth outside of its borders may be evidence Ironbark is expanding its range of influence, or is simply working in conjunction with the Trees of Life's restoration and the Chamber of the Spheres to revitalise the forest. Either way, it is good news. This is actually the same instant as Engledoc's victory in Limbo and the gate's closure¹.

1018 AC, FYRMONT 8:

In a remaining healthy thicket of trees, using combined magics and gained knowledge, Grunalf treekeepers under Talyn's supervision and Shadowelf shamans attempt to reactivate the Dreamland Magic Point west

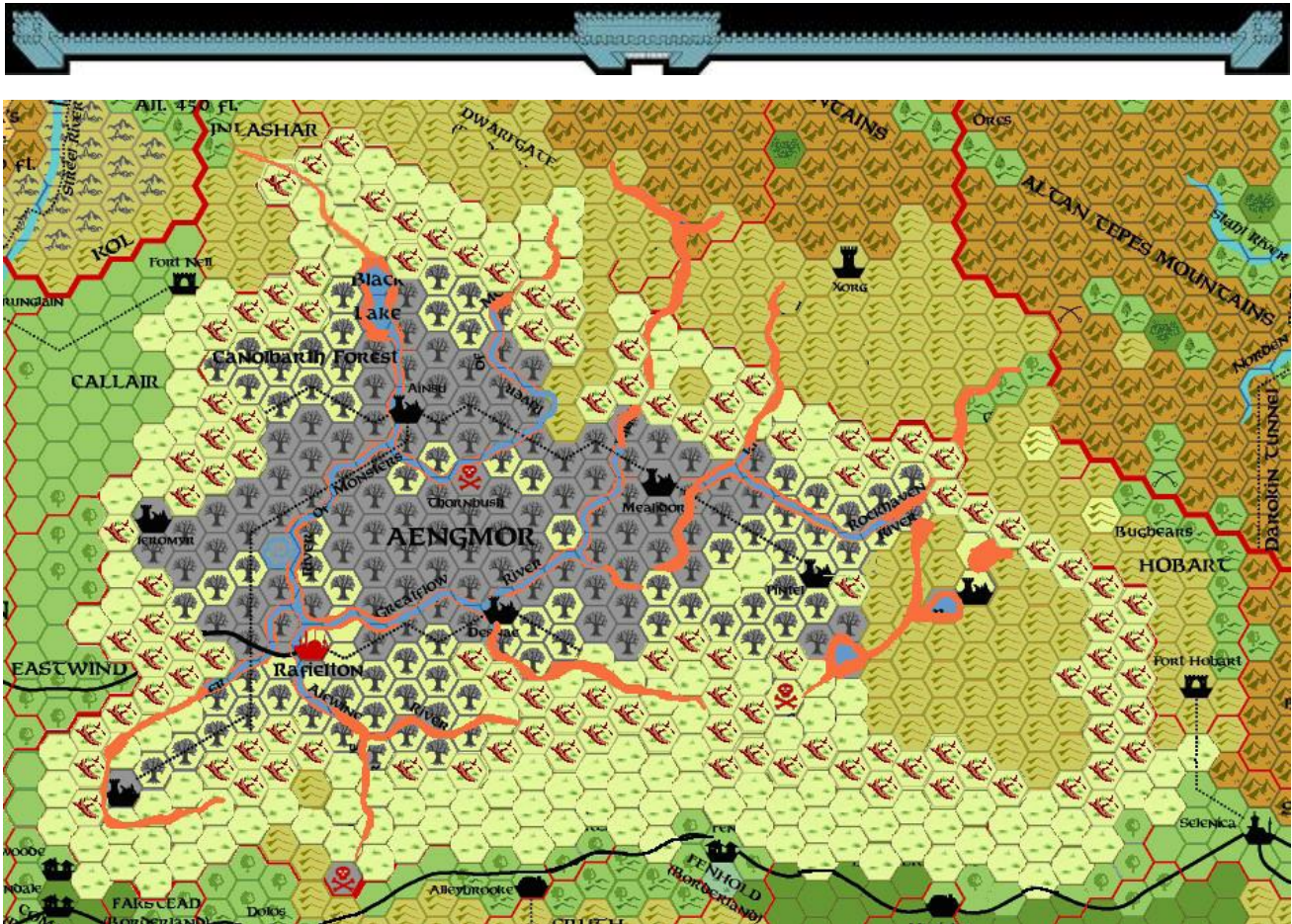
of Shieldtree. With the discovery of new growth around Ironbark, a theory was advanced that restoring the Canolbarth's Good Magic Points might be a means towards further restoration of the forest. Alfheim treekeepers together with Shadow Elf shamans, secretly using magic developed in the Chamber of the Spheres, worked together to bring about this end. The Dreamland's restoration is heralded as a triumph of the diplomatic efforts between the two elven races, as well as an omen the Canolbarth can be restored to its former glory. However; how long this may take is anyone's guess, as the damage already done is extensive. The Forest has receded many miles, and with it the borders of Aengmor.

Engledoc soon discovers the corresponding spot in Limbo of the Dreamland Magic Point, due to the various magic pouring in from the Prime Plane. Shining like a beacon, it attracts the soul army. The Nightwalkers present notice the bright light during the battle has attracted creatures from beyond...from somewhere they would never reach. Several Archons enter the battlefield, attracted by the overwhelming grace and sacrifice of the battling souls. The released energy was so pure, the Archons became fascinated, astounded what was actually taking place, and entered the fray. With the aid of their awesome might, Atzanteotl's forces are obliterated; and while Engledoc closes the gate, the power flows straight into Dreamland.

1020 AC:

¹ [This image](#) depicts Engledoc in his ghost state.

The Fall and Rise of the Canolbarth



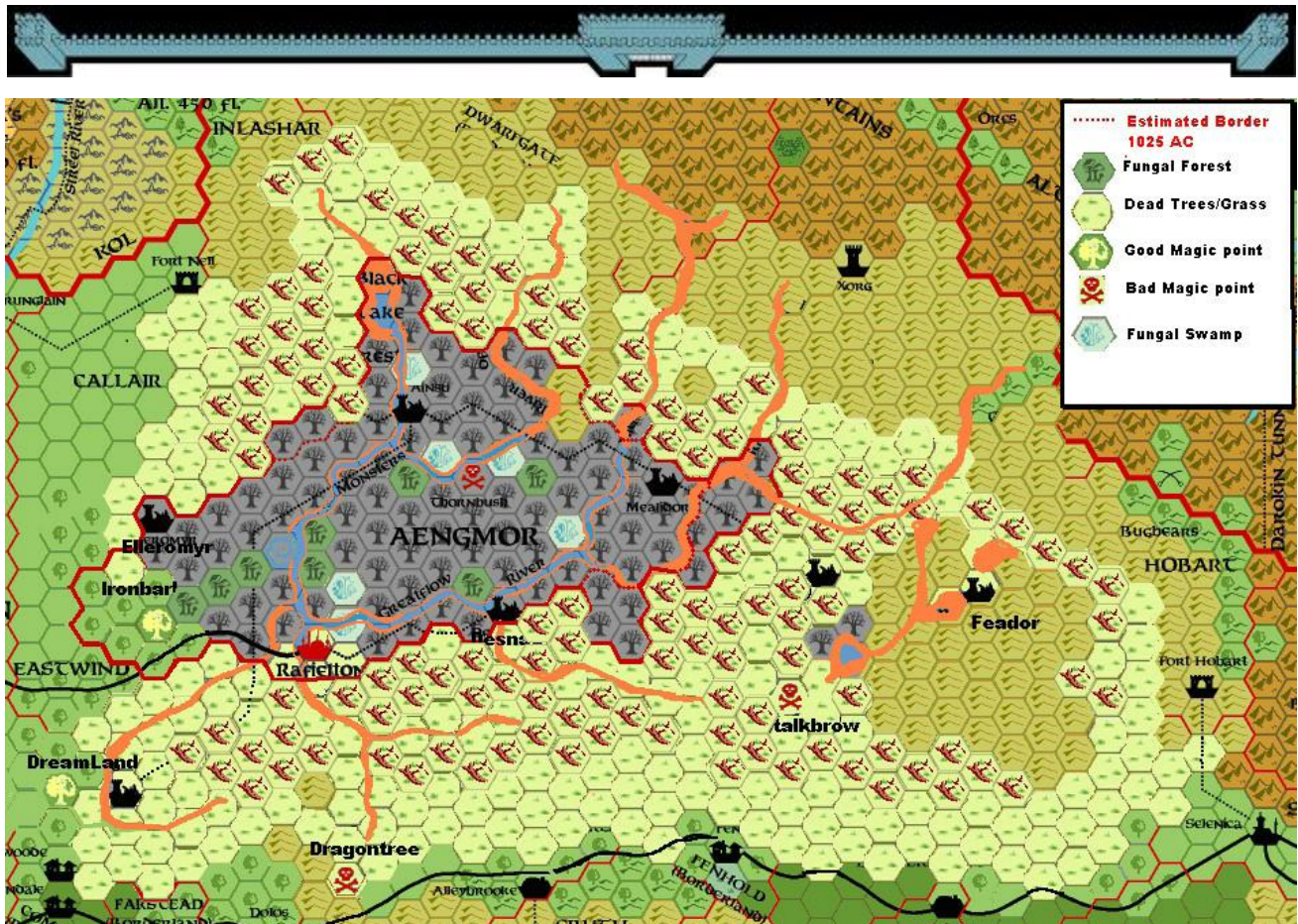
Canolbarth Forest, 1018 AC. After Forest Fires, Great Drought and lack of rain. Bad Magic Points become Isolated, but remain active. Borders have Greatly Receded. This year Dreamland has been reactivated with Grunalf and Shadow Elf cooperation.

The Borders have now regressed further still, yet new forest bloomed in the western Canolbarth around the Good Magic Point of Ironbark. Dreamland also fosters new growth, yet it is too undeveloped to account for all the Shadow Elves needs and wants. Centaurs quickly retake Dreamland, and Princess Tanadaleyo does not challenge their claim. Better a friendly folk there more adept than the Shadow Elves to reignite the forest, than the wood imps and undead previously ruling Lolach-Lomod (Dreamland). It now seems possible the Canolbarth can be saved, but will forever be transformed. Fungal spores; inadvertently transported by the Shadow Elves from the depths, have taken root in many locations over the Canolbarth,

with a multitude of different appearances. The dead darkened forest is sporadically broken by Fungal Forest and near the rivers by fungal swamps. Despite new growth in the West, the Canolbarth is only roughly one third of its previous extent. Rafielton and Wizards Glen now open upon the Streel Plain across the border. It will take several decades, or even centuries, for the Canolbarth to become as large and imposing as before.

At this stage, many Shadow Elves return to their underground world. They are ashamed of failures on the surface, thwarted by their very own magic. Others travel to the legendary city of Aengmor, soon realizing

The Fall and Rise of the Canolbarth



Canolbarth Forest, 1020 AC. The Canolbarth continues to recede, although Ironbark and Dreamland have reignited the young, and fragile forest. Fungi slowly take over the place of the damp corrupted trees in darker parts of the Canolbarth. Borders as estimated by the Shadow Elves circa 1025 AC. Now hoping to halt the contraction of the Canolbarth, they also replant the forest near Ironbark, but having lost interest in reviving Dreamland

they have more freedom to do as they wish. Worship of Rafael is dwindling in this region, replaced by the idolization of Atzanteotl. Rafael is aware of this development, but is unable to act directly against Atzanteotl, yet for all his efforts nothing seems to change. Trying to subversively return his followers to the fold, many instead feel Rafael has broken promises, and continue to worship Atzanteotl. This is Atzanteotl's third major stroke against his foes and rivals during Wrath of the Immortals. The first being against Ilsundal, by taking over the Canolbarth; then indirectly targeting Rad;

and finally Rafael, now betrayed and robbed of followers.

Now in his prime, Xatapechtli continues carrying out diabolical experiments. His offerings to Atzanteotl eventually reveal the existence of "Merging Scrolls" hidden in Glantri, and he sets out to acquire them. Xatapechtli; however, is increasingly leery of Atzanteotl's patronage.

Darokin has begun annexing lost territory in the west, such as Callair; and east, including Hobart, Selenica, and Avonleigh; turning the new acquisitions into farmland in order to

grow crops or provide pasture. Feeding Darokin's burgeoning population and further strengthening their growing market position. Weather patterns seemingly return to normal; however, the northern half of the former Canolbarth and mountain foothills remain as dry as the time before the elves arrival in 800 BC.

Halflings from the Five Shires, with the help of industrious Gnomes, devised a technique to pulverize the enormous lumber, mixing in alkaline minerals and selling it as an effective fertilizer. The deadfall and timber already being harvested will supply merchants and builders for a generation. The price of wood has now fallen below half of what it was before the war.

1100 AC AND BEYOND:

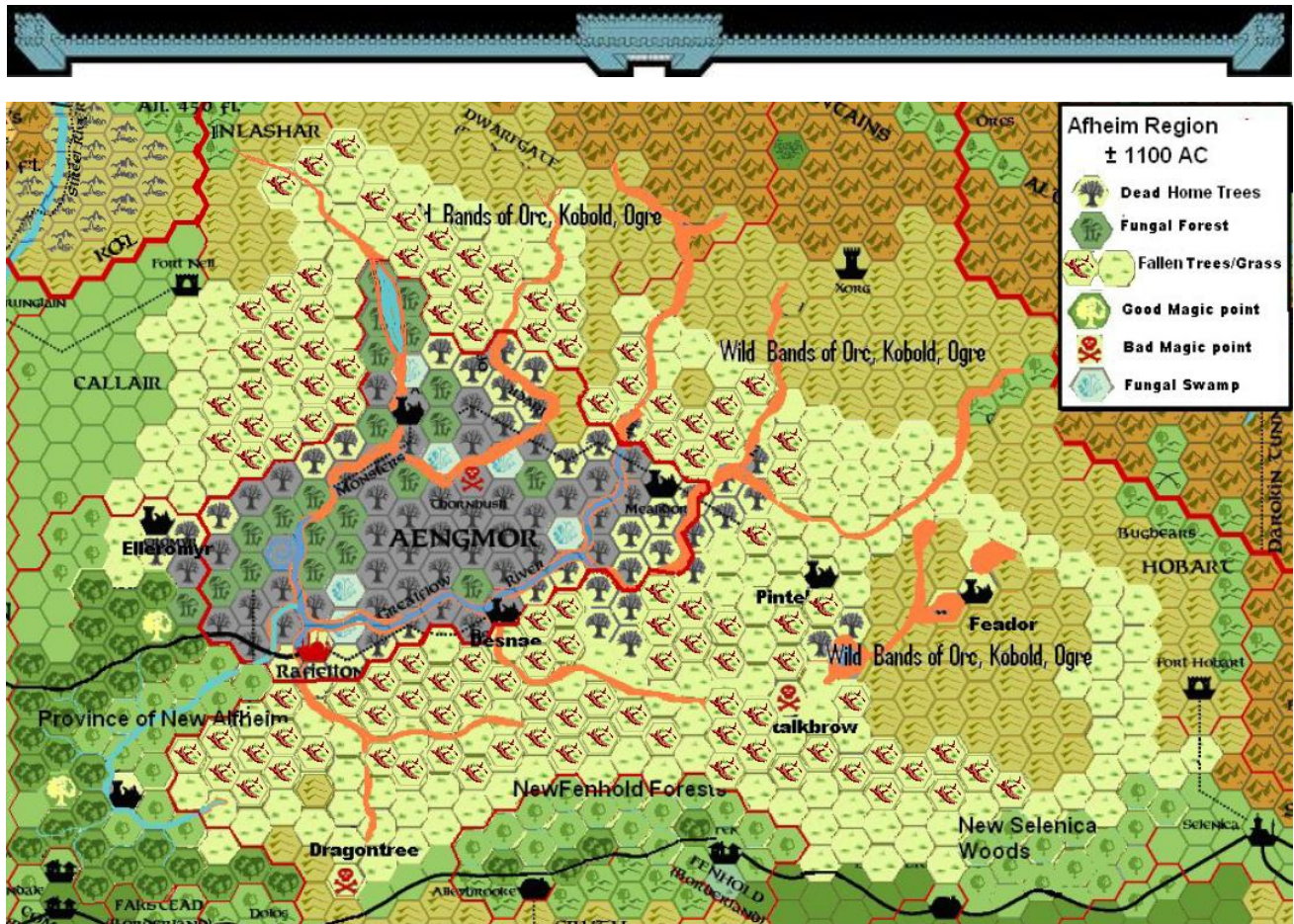
Several decades after Alfheim's desecration, conditions in the Canolbarth and surrounding area have improved for both Alfheim and Darokin. Good Magic Points in the west have expanded the regions regrowth; and new Home Trees, albeit much smaller and younger, have sprung. Due to sufficient runoff from the Southern mountains, and copious amounts of Hin fertilizer; Alfheim Elves, in conjunction with the Darokin population, replant once forested areas, and the region is slowly reforested. The Province of New Alfheim; encompassing Dolos, Farstead, Comaille, and Northern Illefarn; has the densest region of forest regrowth and is populated by Fairykin and returning Alfheim Elves. Sentinel and Hometree growth and expansion is slow, and more time must pass before the Canolbarth returns to its former glory.

An alarming situation arises in 1115 AC. Water in subterranean Shadow Elven territories slowly diminishes. Underground rivers dry up for the first time, and lakes greatly recede. Fungal harvests are meagre and food shortages become commonplace. The Grand Wizard discovers the water seeping through the overlying crust takes decades before reaching the depths. Since drought occurred on the surface, less water has percolated through the earth. With the new rains, water on the surface is progressively absorbed by the soil, and utilized by the growing trees, though might require decades before the aquifer's normal levels are restored. So it appears over time, Atzanteotl's spell of Devastation spell also harmed the Shadow Elves. Most unaware it was a power granted by Atzanteotl, many more Shadow Elves reject Rafiel's teachings holding him responsible, travelling beneath the Broken Lands where plentiful water supplies exist. Converting to a more chaotic lifestyle under the Doctrines of their new Immortal.

Interaction between Shadow Elves factions is emerging along three paths. Some bonds are broken, others strained or altered, while others remain firmly in place. Whether by divisions of clan, family or holding; Shadow Elves revering Rafiel come to associate with one another, while those worshipping Atzanteotl drift farther away. Ties between Darokinians and returning Alfheim Elves is stronger than anticipated with Shadow Elf followers of Rafiel. Despite Immortal affiliation three groups of Shadow Elves arise.

The first group consists of the sparse Shadow Elves who remain on the Surface. Living in

The Fall and Rise of the Canolbarth



Canolbarth Forest, 1100 AC. Most Shadow Elves increasingly return to their underground realm. Though keeping hold over their last bastions in the Canolbarth, the majority of forest continues to diminish and deteriorate.

the darker regions of the Old Canolbarth; they continue having problems adapting. The darker abodes of the corrupted Canolbarth are still shrinking, and sun rays harmful to the Shadow Elves penetrate the forest canopy, the baneful sunlight even falling upon Rafielton. Despite these setbacks, the first children born to common elves and shadow elf mixed parents appear; losing their their pale skin and facial markings to the sun. Overcoming these vulnerabilities, these young elves are able to adapt more easily. This group is slowly incorporated into the Alfheim Clans and Families; their Shadow Elven clans eventually vanishing. Faith in Rafiel is shaken, as Shadow Elves question

whether they were apparently abandoned, or finally guided by Rafiel to this long desired paradise. Religious and political debate ensues, mostly stirred by followers of Atzanteotl.

The larger second group, is comprised of the majority of Shadow Elves returning to the subterranean realms. Calling themselves Deep Elves to further distinguish them from the dark Shadow Elves and Fair Elves. This faction preserves the traditions practiced over the last centuries. Their numbers; however, are greatly diminished. About ten percent having died in the war and its aftermath, while nearly twenty percent

relocated to the surface; and finally, roughly thirty-five percent travel to the Aengmor region, taking up the beliefs of the temple. The original Shadow Elf Clans remain in these locations, although lower in number.

This third group of Shadow Elves have developed a somewhat different appearance from known Shadow Elves; their skin turning darker instead of pale, and their hair almost white. These changes are due to influences of diet, behavior, environment and magic. Both natural magic and Atzanteotl's strains over the region. Living in the former eastern subterranean Broken Lands, primarily centered around the temple of Aengmor, these Shadow Elves follow Atzanteotl, most being reasonably young. Formerly followers of Rafiel, they became greatly disillusioned with the failures of the Canolbarth, and Rafiel's seemingly strict doctrines. None bear the familiar purple marks of the Shaman, and those turning away from Rafiel, and once displaying these blemishes, notice these marks slowly fade.

Losing most terrain altering skills and magic, they live as humanoids once did in the area. These "Dark Elves", as they come to be known, still harbor great animosity toward all surface dwellers, yet consciously accept the companionship of evil races. Even monsters, such as Xrathpack the Beholder, come to dwell in their midst; of course under Dark Elf rule. These Dark Elves slowly become stronger, developing superior abilities. The neighbouring Dwarves dubbed them: "*Drow*", stating they are "*Worse than an elf, or an inferior Humanoid; even sorrier than a Shadow Elf*".

Most Dark Elves slowly turn toward Evil, though they certainly do not consider it so; claiming retribution, equality, and rights, for past misdeeds aimed at them. No Shadow Elf clans remain among them, all joining the "new clan" of...the Dark Elves.

Fenfolk revolt in Fenhold, in 1119 AC. Their heritage becoming known to them after adventurers succeeded in entering Dovestone Tower in the Cruth Mountains.¹ With greater than foreseen forces, they take hold of Fenhold. Soon their reign extends to Alleybrook. This minor political upheaval forced human communities in the region to band together with elves, despite mutual reservations, as ordered by the Fenfolk. This action is a prelude to eastward expansion of New Canolbarth. The New Fenhold Forest, never held Hometrees, yet elves used magic to rapidly alter the area into a more suitable habitat; one where Hometrees might later prosper.

Around Selenica, residents have transformed the cursed province of Avonleigh into a new wooded region with the Alfheim elves aid. An attempt to transform the region in order to act as a deterrent towards undead. The endeavor is a partial success, as undead disperse over a greater region and have lesser impact on surrounding communities. Many fallen Hometrees still lie around, and while the fungal forest has taken root on more locations, the old Canolbarth is still shrinking. The magic used to recreate the forest's water resources failed so far, and

¹ **Dovestone Tower**; This area, and other Fenhold locations, will be revealed on the 1 mile hex Canolbarth Forest Map, coming soon to The Piazza & Vaults of Pandius. See also footnote Half-Elves.

most water is gone deep within the underground.

The link between negative forces in the region is now becoming clearer. Ravaging humanoid warbands in the North continually plunder, preventing economic growth. Several renegade Dragons attack Shadow Elf villages, and Evil Fairies between Stalkbrow and Dragontree further disrupt the region. Shadow Elves renouncing Rafiel's teachings, destabilize the religious foundations of the Shadow Elf Clans.

In the winter of 1121 AC, Xatapechtli becomes engrossed with his experiments. His ambition is to eventually exterminate all not obeying Atzanteotl's creed. Failing to convert Carmina Daefiel, a captured Shadow Elf Follower of Rafiel, he then decides to use her in his evil experiments. Using the merging effect learned earlier, he attempts to meld this obstinate elf with a wolf spider in a more pliable mindstate. The extremely painful transformation lasts at least twelve hours, with the outcome being somewhat unexpected; a partial union of two species. Similar in appearance to Manscorpions, having the Torso and upper body of the original Elf, yet the lower body replaced with the abdomen and legs of of an immense spider. Carmina seemingly retains her gender and personality after the transformation, and acquired a poisonous bite and a strong devotion to her creator. Her dietary system changed into a carnivorous one, her digestive saliva liquefying flesh to consume. Her diet consists now primarily of Demihumans, Humanoids, Humans or animals and Insects in times of scarcity.

This ritual, however, alters Xatapechtli as well. Atzanteotl, pleased with his subject's devotion, feels Xatapechtli's latest evil deed is proof enough. Summoning Xatapechtli's bodily essence, Atzanteotl transforms Xatapechtli into a superior female ideal of this new race, and a reminder of his power. Atzanteotl "gifts" Xatapechtli with the name Lolth, a title now revered by Dark Elves of Aengmor and the Broken Lands.

Lolth directly starts to achieve a hold over her disciples, showering them with all the treasure she collected as Xatapechtli. Which contains millions in riches, and a multitude of magical devices. Lolth, no longer needing these material possessions, feels their best use is bestowing these resources unto followers, strengthen the faith.

Within a few decades, Atzanteotl withdraws from active coercion and plotting, though remaining acknowledged and respected, and Lolth ascends to his role. With her creations, these "Driders" (Spider + Drow = Drider) will become the fifth and final stem of Shadow Elves. Hollow World Schattenalfen being the fourth. Lolth creates Driders from followers deemed weak of devotion. The fear of this punishment makes her control absolute. Even Dark Elves dislike and fear Driders, despite cohabitation.

Over the next years in Limbo, effects of the Great Battle of Souls fought by Engledoc become clear. With the combined efforts of Alfheim elves, Shadow Elves and Fairies; the Magic points of Dewdrop and Turnclaw become cleansed of their former taint¹. Finally with the help of Raspaert the Gold

¹ **Magic Points;** Dewdrop, sanctified in the Spring of 1115 AC, now creates moisture in

Driders¹

Biological construct

These strange creatures have the Head and torso of a Dark Elf and the legs and lower body of a huge spider. They are created by Lolth the new Dark Elf Immortal.

When a Dark Elf of above-average ability reaches 6th level, the goddess may put him or her through a special test. Those that fail become driders. Priests of 8th and mages of 11th level or higher never fail the test.

All Driders are capable of casting the spells of a Normal; Dark Elf, and retain the magical or Clerical abilities they possessed before the transformation. 40% were Clerics of 6th level, 20% of 7th level, 20% were 6th level mages, 10% of 7th level, 5% of 8th level and 5% of 9th or 10th level. Driders (and Dark Elf) Clerics are granted spell-like abilities by Lolth Clairvoyance, Detect Lie, Charm person, and Dispel Magic once a day.

Combat:

They fight with swords or axes or bows, and retain any weapon mastery (which may even be increased by self-training only).

They can also bite with their fanged mouth for 1d4 damage and inject a poison. (Save vs poison at -2 or paralysis occurs for 10+1d10 minutes (10 minutes = 1 Turn, 1 minute = 6 rounds). If the save is successful it causes 1d10 minutes numbness resulting in a initiative penalty of 1.

¹ See [this article](#) at the Forgotten Realms Wiki and [this article](#) on Wikipedia for images of a Drider.

Dragon, returning after decades in exile, they even alter the Bad Magic Point of Dragontree, now linked to the Lawful Draconic Plane of Diamond instead of the Draconic Plane of Chaos, Pearl; in the Winter of 1149 AC. Thus Dragontree becomes a Good Magic Point.

1140 - 1199 AC:

The New Canolbarth is now a continuing work of progress between Alfheim Elves and Darokinians; and as many of the Deep Elves have lost interest in the outer world, they refrain from obstructing the forest's rebirth. First and foremost because they have discovered most of the underground water originated in the Canolbarth, and because of their past deeds even vast underground resources are now rapidly diminishing. So the Deep Elves decide to remain absent, and by their actions, actually promote regrowth. Unknown to the Alfheim Elves and Darokinians, Deep Elves use their ground magics to nourish the soil, harkening the forest's revival, as retribution.

Fungal growth in all its variety becomes a normal occurrence within the greater parts of the New Canolbarth. These fungi originate in the Shadow Elves' underground realm, and with resident moisture they have replaced the dead trees where they once grew, filling an important niche in the ecosystem. Altered Hometrees still remain in existence. These heavily shaded areas will become home to the Shadow Elves deciding

the form of low thin fog for nearby Fungi. Turnclaw, purified in the Summer of 1128 AC, functions as if unchanged.

Drider

Biological construct

Climate/ Terrain:	Subterranean Caves and Cities
Frequency:	Very Rare
Organization:	Solitary or Bands
Activity Cycle:	Above ground Night only (they suffer double sun damage as any Shadow Elf.)
Diet:	Any meat, but liquified meat or blood preferred
Abilities:	As normal Dark Elves ST+1, IN/WI unaffected, DX-2, CO+3, CH-5 (3-18 max)
Size:	L 9' tall 4-5' wide, 8' long , legs can span 15'
AL :	Chaotic (Evil)
NA:	1 or 1d4
Armour Class:	3
Armor Value	3 on insect body/legs else 0 or by armor worn
MV:	120'/40', on web 50%
HD:	1 HD / Level
HP:	1d8+1 / Level
THACO:	As per dark elf mage or priest level +2
ATT:	1 weapon or 1 bite
Damage:	by weapon or 1d4+special
Special Attacks:	Paralyzing Poison (1*) Spells (1*/2 spell levels able to cast)
Special Defences:	nil
Magic Resistance:	15%
Treasure:	Sx2, U, + 1d3 Dark Elf weapons (may be magic), 1 Holy Book+Symbol or 1 Spellbook. 15% top half of a Dark Elf Armor (may be magical).
Morale:	10
XP Mages:	6th*** level 1250, 7th*** level 1650
XP Priest:	6th*** level 1250, 7th*** level 1650, 8th*** level 2300, 9th*** Level 3000, 10th**** level 3700

Society;
Because they've failed their goddess's test , they are outcasts from the dark elf communities. As thus they are usually found alone or with 2d6 huge spiders of any kind(10% chance). They still feel responsible for their failure and keep near the Dark Elves and help where they can. They are violent, aggressive creatures that favor blood over all types of food (like spiders) they stalk their victims tirelessly, waiting for the right chance to strike.

Sometimes they are placed in temples, burial grounds or enclosed dungeons with valuables as guards as their final task, the don't want to fail again. Then their morale then will be 11 instead a normal 10.

Driders as being biological constructs, created solely by Atzanteotl's Immortal Curse, do not reproduce (they simply lack the necessary organs), however, as being originally Shadow Elven, they may have the

desire to do so. They have a Shadow Elves lifespan.

They are able to produce a thick white-bleuish or grey (latter only by males) webbing, which is only used in creating pathways (over chasms etc), or strengthening unstable constructions. Unlike normal web, it can't be used to entrap a prey within, as it quickly loses its stickiness, but is strong enough to support weight. It can be harvested, and used to make silk ropes of, or silk fabric. This silk can't be colored (except by a color spell) and is very coarse or rough, so not likely to be used in clothing. Even Driders know their web has no other use. It can't be tossed or thrown, but once stuck to a surface it will bond until washed with alcohol. If they want to use it as a bridge, they must find a way to the other side themselves first, dragging the web behind them. This web is as durable as common nylon (several months to years depending on use/circumstances).

to reside on the surface, and protects them from the harsh sun.

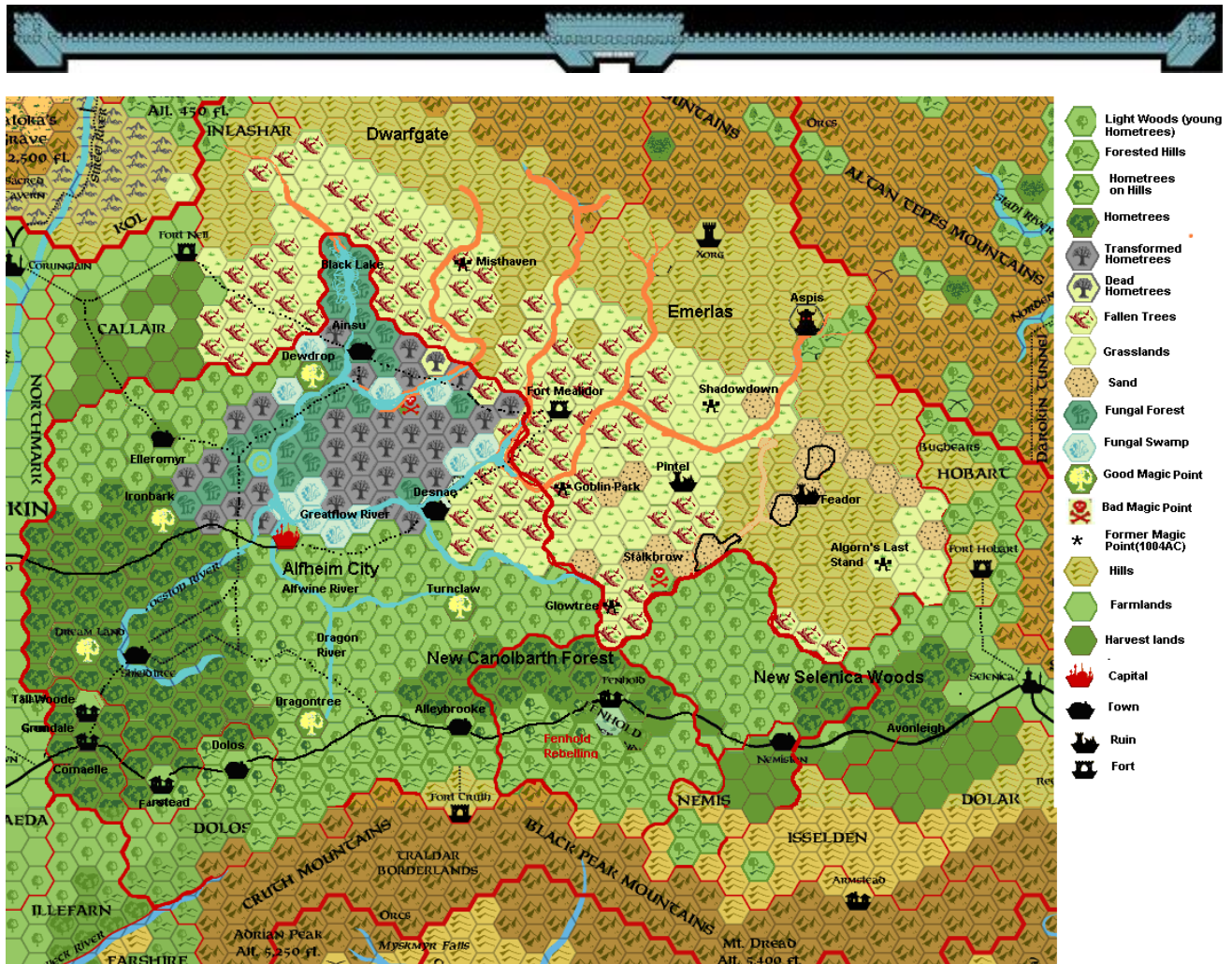
The Canolbarth has also overgrown the southern Darokin borderlands north of Karameikos. The northern borderlands remain dry, only irrigated by several seasonal creeks and rivers, and nearly bare of forest and scrubland, becoming a region undesirable to most. In effect, the Canolbarth Forest shifts southward to rest against the Cruth Mountains between Darokin, Karameikos, and the Five Shires. This has forced Darokin citizens and Elves to

work together on a completely different level, though seen as mutual cooperation until now, will establish distinct relationships in the future.

The Pale Elves rely now on magic fungal potions (made from surface fungi that basked in the sun) to prevent damage from the sun¹, but the children born from Alfheim and Shadow elf parents seem to lose this

¹ **Sunlight;** The original, painful, way of adaptation to sunlight and any side effects are extensively explained in Gazetteer 13 The Shadow Elves, page 52.

The Fall and Rise of the Canolbarth



Canolbarth Forest, 1150 AC. The New Canolbarth clearly grows, while the older parts are still affected by drought and fire.

weakness. The continuous use of these fungal potions has also a strange side effect; the duration of effect becomes longer with each use of the potion. Maybe in time, the Pale Elves won't need any potions or only once in a long timespan. The future will tell.

1146 AC+:

The Soul Army of Engledoc greatly diminished, each gate became harder to conquer than the one before, and less and less elven souls were available. Engledoc accepted now all lawful souls, even Dwarves, who were willing to perish ultimately for the

greater good. But his number grew less and less, and any progress came slower and harder with greater losses.

The Orcs of Xorg in the North saw the success of the combined efforts of the Elves and decided they wanted to have their own Magic Point. Some Half-Orcs who lived with the Elves in former Alheim city knew of the locations of some magic points; even now they are collapsed. All the prisoners they had captured and enslaved, and their offspring (since spring 1013 AC), were gathered, and horrifying sacrificial rituals combined with Shaman and Wokani magic were poured into

the formerly good magical point Shadowdown (one of the Initial magic points from the primal creation of the Canolbarth.)

In the meantime in Limbo Engledoc became attracted to the signs of incoming magic. He discovered another large Gate connected to an unknown Magic Point in Limbo. With his decreased army he began another part of his eternal battle. (Time is way different in Limbo, decades here are centuries there). But soon something went awfully wrong, while battling the final guards of Shadowdown, souls from different creatures, mostly humanoids, and a lot of blood and darkness began pouring in. Within the tendrils of darkness, wading in creeping blood thousands of sacrificed lives came in like a wave of souls. As yet new and unaware of their location and situation, Engledoc succeeded in slaying these new souls with less difficulty than the familiar guards. He succeeded to close down this gate and as thus reactivated the Magic point in the Prime Plane, but the work of the humanoids in the Prime Plane turned its influence to evil.¹ Maybe the humanoids also succeeded in their goal, due to the continuous balance that the forest needs to remain active. But this will remain unknown to the Elves, humanoids and even to Engledoc.

1165 AC+:

The Northern part of the area remains dry, only moistened by several seasonal creeks and rivers. Being almost bare of forest and other growth, it became a region undesired by most. Humanoids (Especially the Orcs

¹ **Shadowdown area;** This made the area more or less resemble the [Dead Forest](#) as seen in this illustration on the web.

from Xorg, and from the former Broken lands), but also Kobolds and Ogres, dominate the region. The Goblins have retreated north into the mountains, and the Bugbears went East where they were welcome by a new bugbear regime under a powerful and clever Bugbear King named Purs. Purs was very intelligent and used all his wits to investigate the Ruins of Feador. He came forth with a multitude of former elven magical items. Their use still unknown, his shamans of Bartziluth commenced investigations. Purs was an experience humanoid hero. With skills trained by his father and grandfather from the era Thar ruled the Broken Lands he had become great. He had a wife and since recently a son. The small teddy bear-like creature suckled on the teet of his mother. Purs saw the glint of power and will within the dark eyes. He was content. Ushurpurs was the young one's name.

1190 AC, Spring:

At the former Magic Point of Glowtree several fairies convened reintroducing foreign bioluminescent plants and several colonies of flutterlings. Even the nearby still active negative Magic Point Thornbush and its resident Imps were completely unaware. The old Treant Doak from the Emerlas had summoned the fairies, together with Raspaert and all druids and Talyn Grunalf and all of the other elven Treekeepers of the former Canolbarth who survived. He said something special was going to be happening.

Engledoc, slowly weakened by the centuries of battle, wandered with the remains of his army through Limbo, in search of yet another gate to close..

Doak and the fairies began singing an enchanting fairy song. The elves (not unknowing of fairy ways) wondered why, but stepped in. The human druids started to hum like a bumblebee. Raspaert summoned a powerful Dragon magical aura or energy. The soft yet beautiful orchestra of fairy power and music became audible all over the Canolbarth. Some Orcs in the north got goosebumps; *"Not a nice day to be outside"*, was their saying.

Engledoc wondered when he would finally find resolution in their quest for eternal rest for him and the accompanying souls, suddenly they all hear a beautiful song. Maybe again a sign to another gate, they all prepared for battle, even though they were weary and weak. When arriving at the location they could see three Nightwalkers, three Nightstalkers, and 4 Nightwings with a large army of Wights and Wraiths who were distraught by the sensitive sounds and the light beckoning from the gate.

Several Wraiths entered the gate into the Prime Plane, only to be turned by the clerical powers of the few Elven clerics within the singing group.

Engledoc somehow knew this would be his final fight. His last soul-points thrived and throbbed within his almost empty shell. Yet still they grabbed their weapons of memory and entered the fray. The song became more and more powerful, and gave a warm feeling, something welcoming in the cold of Limbo. Then suddenly the sky opened and a golden light descended from the heavens.. A large beautiful Elven lady stepped from it, her appearance shredded the undead with fear, and her great power of Awe easily

dispelled more. Several winged humanoids followed in her path, armed to the teeth. The battle was short and strong. Within the vapors of dispersing undead souls, she stepped forward towards Engledoc and stretched out a welcoming hand. No word was said, and if there would be one, it could never been understood due to the overpowering musical song emanating from the portal. Engledoc looked at the familiar hand of Ilsundal¹ and turned away, first moving towards the gate to close it. The Music echoing still while the magical gate collapsed and the glowing lady smiled; She was right...her choice was good. She directed her hand again towards Engledoc. Weak he dislodged his iron Gauntlet and settled his small and tender fingers upon the giant hand. With the familiar smile she beckoned

¹ **Immortals;** They normally occupy sturdy, but unique, material forms designed for convenience, familiarity, and pragmatic utility. Though these forms are technically mortal, they are extremely durable, and are referred to as normal forms. Such a form can imitate the character's mortal form in shape, but the flesh has been replaced with a sturdier form. The immortal can make his manifestation form look like anything. Most immortals choose one or two specific appearances for their Manifestation forms. Often guided by great happenings in their Immortal existence. A Major Strike thus can result in the change of the Immortals appearance. Not only is this psychological but even Immortals use impression, appearance, reaction and non-verbal communication as generated by the current form in their decision. Ilsundal suffered a Major Stroke on Ambyrmont 28 1007 AC by Atzanteotl, and now tends to find ways to adapt, to change and renew growth. Especially for Ilsundal who is a chaotic Energy Immortal, change is good. He (now She) thinks a new appearance will ignite new reactions and thus growth.

the other hero souls to do the same. Then a light, and Limbo was gone. Engledoc opened his eyes. The world now full of nature, trees and animals. He saw his company, now all bearing huge swanlike wings on their shoulders. *"You have done well, Engledoc, Elven Angel Hero, now first it is time to rest"*. He shrugged his shoulders, closed his wings and fell asleep. Glowtree was reactivated.

1195 AC, Winter:

In the Hills around Feador, the powerful Bugbear King Purs perished from Old age. His son Ushurpurs, now himself an experienced soldier in the Bugbear army, took over and raised his personal Kingdom Ushurpurs in his own name. All the former magic of the Feador elves were now his kind to use. Among these were many potions of longevity, ...nobody knew at that moment how long Ushurpurs would be able to rule.

1200 - 1250 AC:

1200-1250 AC+:

The DDC and the two Elven groups convened in 1202 AC. After a relatively short debate they all decided to adopt the Elven region within the Borders, politics and commerce of Darokin. Mutual benefits for all of them have driven the Elves and humans to make this important decision.

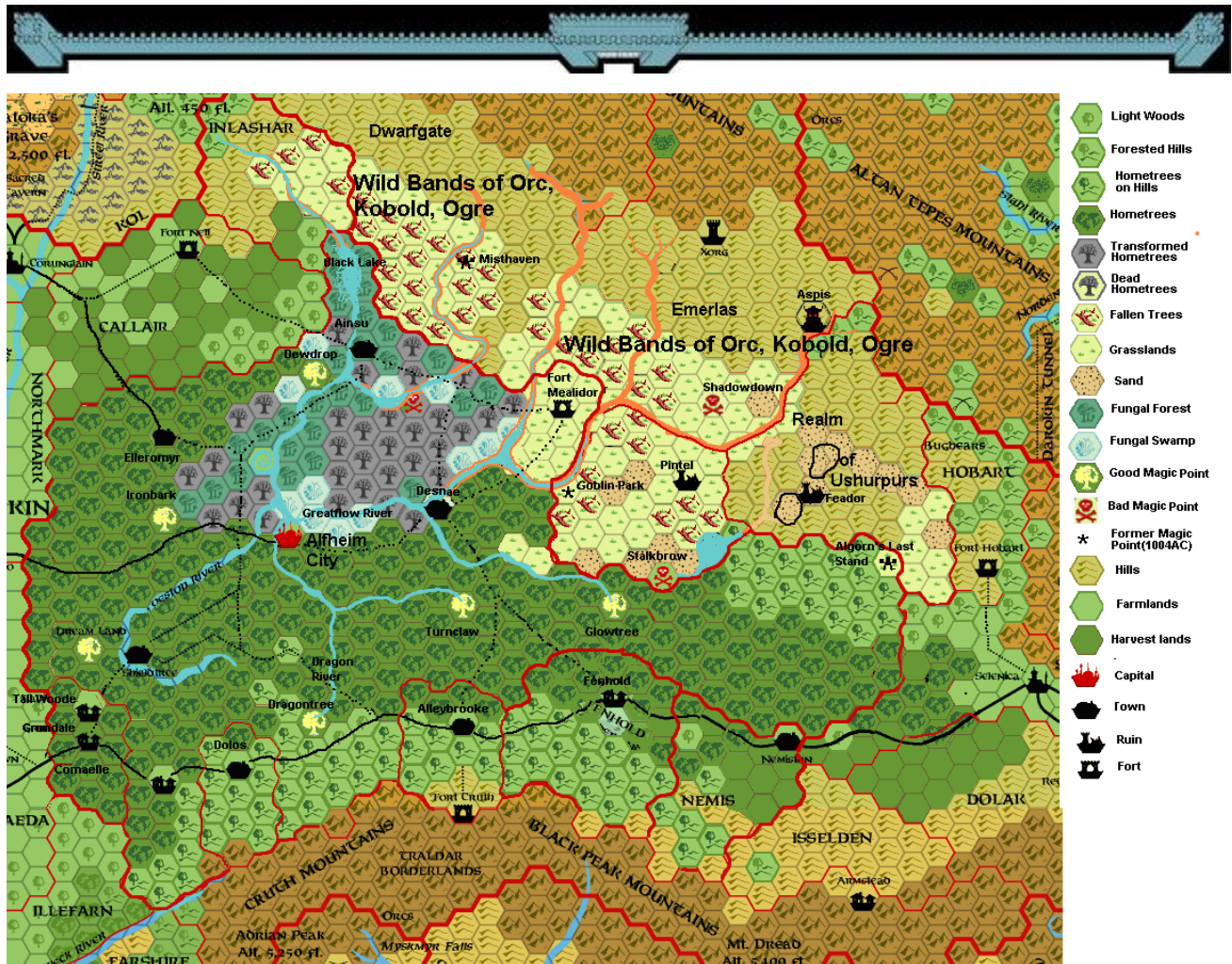
The Canolbarth has regrown in these decades. The trees tower along the southern Cruth Mountains, and on some places the top branches can even be seen between the spires of the mountain chain from Karamaikos and the Five Shires. The weather

patterns are full with rain again, except for the northern part of Darokin. The cold winds rolling down the Dwarfgate Mountains blows all moisture southwards to the Cruth Mountains, where it combines in massive rain clouds.

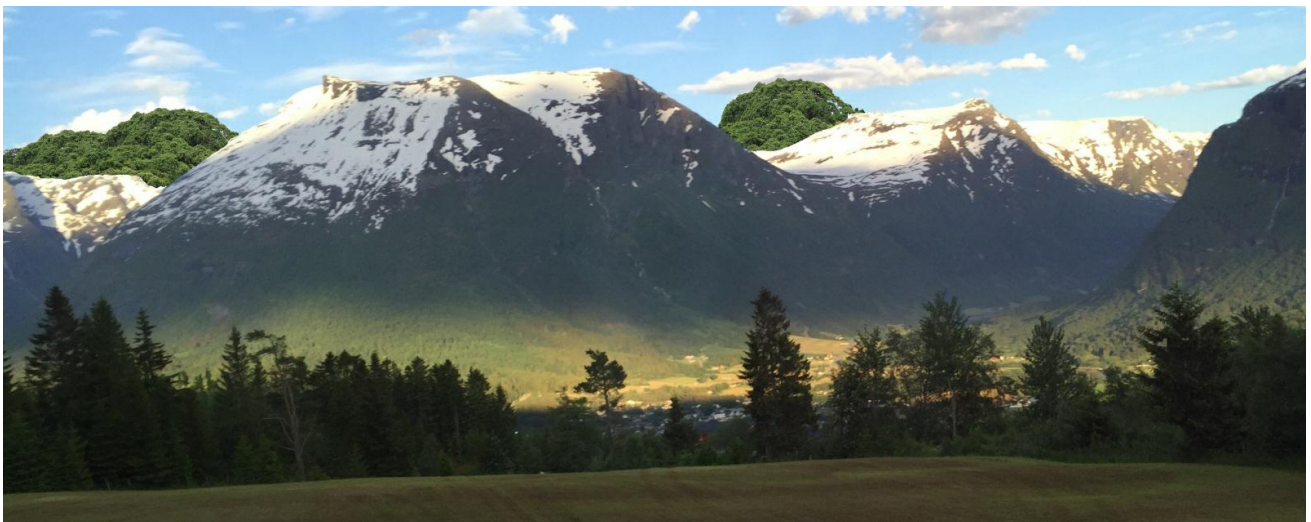
The elves and humans now share the same land, the same profits and laws. although some difference still exist, and sometimes even give problems, elves and humans are now equal to each other. They more often live together or near the other, sharing or trading, and even forming relations. Ilsundal now again enables them to gain mixed offspring.¹

¹ **Half-Elves;** As according the Rulebooks no Half-Elves exist. But according the Savage Coast rules (Immortal influence) and the mentioning of mixed elf-human relations in Gaz 7, they do exist. Thus the rule used there must also be here; Ilsundal decides to allow Half-Elves to be, no more individually, but now on her whole race, using the same magic. The **secret of the Fenfolk** is that they are all partially Elven, in effect Half-Elves. Due to generations no further intermingling with non-Fenfolk the same genes still run through their bodies. They are all descendants of the first Elf-Doulakki intermixing, but rejected by both cultures at that time, forced to retreat in the most unwanted region at that time; the Fens. Several clashes, and wars deprived them of cultural and mental growth, and after centuries they forgot their own past. Their ruins are feeble reminders of a past hated by men, misunderstood by Elves, moments of resolution and cultural growth. Current Fenfolk look almost human, but are smaller and thinner, almost frail, and live roughly 25% longer than humans. They have almost no elven features, if so, then only minor. In effect they further follow the same game rules as other Half-Elves, except what is given here.

The Fall and Rise of the Canolbarth



Canolbarth Forest, between 1200 and 1250 AC. The New Canolbarth, more clutched against the southern Cruth Mountains, is alive and viable. The rest of the Steel Plan up to the Dwarfgate Foothills is very dry, and home to various humanoids and lowlife



Towering Canolbarth Trees, as seen from Aergruth, in Highshire of the Five Shires

The internal path and Treepaths have been restored and connect the several towns. Typically many of these paths go up through the trees, while in the regions with fungi and lower structures, these follow over the ground, and sometimes even tunnel short distances (especially near Ainsu and Desnae.). The nation changed the Ruins of Mealidor into a strong fortress to protect the region from humanoid incursions from the North.

The Elven city Elleromyr came to be attached to the Darokin road network, and now has a (4 horses abreast) cobblestone road to Corunglain., just as the former Elven capital, which has a cobblestone road of 6 horses abreast. The road passes the old Minti Melon

monument ruins, which are now to be restored as a monument of friendship between humans and elves of all Canolbarth.

The Darokin Province Calair became a much larger region, with great produce (probably started by the very fertile ground, what was formerly elven woods). Many farmers relocated to this province when the Canolbarth absorbed their former lands. The only remembrance of the old Canolbarth is a single untainted huge Hometree in the area formerly known as Parth Teu'kelytka (Elven for; "*Moonhorse Fields*"). The elves requested to leave this 8 mile wide field encircled by four henges as it is for this legendary creature, which the new residents of the area readily accepted.

Treepaths;

Many Elven trails and roads are not located on the ground. These 10'-30' wide paths are often several hundreds of feet above the ground. Several branches of Hometrees were (and again will be) shaped in such a way that passage from one to the other Hometree can be made with relative ease. Sometimes they even the reach to the top of hills, where they can get accessed easily. Otherwise, there are wide walkways circling the stems of the Hometrees enabling to get to the interconnecting treepath branches. These branches can even be traversed by carts, but only with the use of Elven Horses or Moonhorses (Both having a natural Treewalking ability. Further information about these creatures see [Monster Manual Compilation](#) chapter "Animals". Rarely have these paths railings, except when having a steep angle, stairway or attached settlement.

These railing tend to be highly decorative, and often bridge over the whole path. Bioluminescent lanterns (with hoods if need be) guide the way. Where there are no interconnecting branches, sturdy wide rope-bridges do exist to continue the Treepath. All in all it will be somewhat like [this](#)¹.

Treepath traversing need a Treewalking skill every mile covered (or a dex check at-5). Failure means a minor mistake; roll again; failure means a serious fall, roll again; failure means fall down. Elves, and other Forest creatures get a +2 on this roll. Usage of carts give a penalty of -3, but cumulative if failed for each next roll. Carts without spiked wheels give a penalty of -5 instead.

¹ See [this web address](#) and [this web address](#) for images of Treepaths.

The province of Inlashar became a border region, when the old towers were restored giving enough protection from the humanoid incursions in the north. The main road to Corunglain now fully installed, being instead improved remains of the ancient Urudtai trail. A 6 horses abreast cobble-, and flagstone road it now has become.

The southern provinces; Dolos, Fenhold, Nemis, Cruth, Comeille have changed significantly. Some borders were rearranged, mostly under command of the borders of the Canolbarth itself, some lands were given to bordering provinces, some were taken. They are now separate provinces, no more borderland, within the new province of Alfheim. A stable fusion of Elven and human residents, they changed and grew, also due to the great benefit from the widened road (8 horses abreast) and Dwarven Train through the area. Fenhold is now an open Prince, where especially Half-Elves are welcomed. Its borders became greater than before their revolt.

The provinces; Farstead, Alleybrook, and Canolbarth Borderlands, ceased to be. The Province of Alleybrook became part of the Province of Cruth.

The formerly cursed province of Avonleigh, became part of the Province of Selenica or the Great Province of Alfheim. The Province of Hobart, also became part of Selenica, mostly due to the importance of the Dwarven Train.

The Provinces Northmark and Eraeda only lost some miles of land, but gained more water flows.

The Province of Eastwind is completely overgrown by the new Canolbarth. Many humans left decades, almost centuries, earlier out of fear of the Shadow Elves, but many more leave now the forest takes over. The hamlets and villages had a new precept; *"Clear the new trees on the land and keep doing it, for if you do not, the forest will take your land, and you have to adapt or*

leave". This act caused an overall change in the region. Some locations disappeared, swallowed by the New Canolbarth, leaving nothing or only some minor ruins. Other locations became open spots with a hamlet or village enclosed within the towering trees. Many moved to the new lands in Calair, where the fertile ground gives abundant produce. Older hamlets and villages grew into villages and towns; like Cornackers and Sword of the Lake.

The Province of Eastwind thus seized to exist. The Elves and humans in the region gained new Hometrees, no giant Oaks, but Walnut. Equal in size and shape, but enabling more light to the undergrowth. Especially on the Emyrn Kotsivoite (Elvish for Nut-bearing Hills) these giant trees grow prominently. All other nut-bearing plants (Hazel, Hickory, etc.) also gained a tripled growth in produce, hence nobody complained.¹

¹ **Walnut Hometrees;** The average size of the walnuts from these Walnut Hometrees is 1d3+1 feet, however, 5% may gain a size of 8+1d4 feet in diameter. The larger versions lose most taste, but the flesh is perfect for Walnut Oil. The nutshells are usable as baskets, buckets or helmets, while the larger, may even be used as roofs or wagon parts. The outer softer shells are used in making

Alfheim city, renamed again, is now somewhat of a secondary Capital in Darokin, specialized in Elven matters and Nature in common. Elves are still ruled here, now democratically together with Darokinians. A merging of Shadow Elf stone structures, nature, wood structures and even human ideas, it became a much brighter place than before. The Alfheim Part of the Darokin Senate includes both Alfheim Elves and former Shadow Elves, and there is even a consulate for the Deep Shadow Elves. In effect Alfheim now is part of Darokin and vice-versa. Both share all rights and benefits,...as being one nation and one population, sharing and taking benefit of differences in race, culture and ideas. They all now listen more to each other instead of letting themselves being lead by bigotry and fear, distrust or hate.

The merging of the Shadow Elves and their altered Hometrees and Fungal forest became balanced. The fungi live like they did in the Underground, or have slightly adapted (to the sun)... the same happened with the Shadow Elves. All offspring seem to have lost

fertilizer, inks, or fibres. Elves, Druids and Fairies adore the wooden shells, and use them wherever they can. The region is dangerous in Autumn, falling nuts cause 1d8 damage per feet diameter if hit (save vs DR to negate). A cracking sound above will signal that a nut starts falling. The locals rapidly learn to recognize this peculiar sound or stay near the stem of the trees, where the chance of being hit is very low (each of these give a +4 on the saving throw, may be added). Giant nutshells are also a good way to hide. For miniature use and diorama building DM's and players, this gives great use of real walnuts in your crafting works ;-) See [Wikipedia entry](#) for more info on Walnuts.

all underground adaptations. The only difference is that they seem to be somewhat paler than common elves. These Shadow Elves are free from their ultimate Faith of Rafiel, but some still follow it. Others follow Elven Faiths of the Alfheim Elves or even the Church of Darokin. In effect they are no more different than the Alfheim Elves except from some history and interests.

The Dark Elves hate these Pale Elves more than they hate Alfheim Elves, but their culture of hate and distrust has caused them to become a loosely tied clutch of small groups within the caves of the Old Broken Lands. They seem to cooperate with spiders and monsters like the Beholder Xrathpack, and many humanoids which returned to the Eastern Broken Lands, although still ruled by the Dark Elves. It is rumored that one of these Dark Elves recently became Immortal under the guidance of Atzanteotl, and slowly takes over his faith in this region. Her Symbol seems to be a spider, and her magic was so strange and evil, that she even merged spiders with Dark Elves (called Driders)

The Deep Elves, still have contact and even share commerce with the surface, but blocked all ways to the Broken Lands. They refrain themselves from making contact with the Dark Elves, and if there is contact, it is mostly a short battle, and then a retreat.

The bad magic Point of Stalkbrow is still active with evil Fairies and Goblin Park is still inactive. The border between the new forest and these regions is under close supervision, both by patrols and magic. But even the evil fairies and humanoids keep a strict eye upon the region. This stalemate will probably remain in existence for centuries, maybe with

some skirmishes in between. The region between Goblin Park and active Stalkbrow, is currently sparsely populated by the Imps, and regular attacks of the nearby Orc, Ogre and Kobold bands (who have taken hold of the ruins of Pintel). The Wokani and Shamans became more knowledgeable due to the books they recovered in the ruins of the former Elves here. Though most is gone by decay, enough was available to increase the yield of spells these humanoids were able to wield. Many large spiders and scorpions live in this whole region, used as mounts for the Imps. Other insects (including large versions) live here too, feeding upon the remnants of the former Hometrees, being food themselves for the spiders. There is rumor of a single hive of Aspis north-east of this region near the hills (near the Realm of Ushurpurs), but these refrain themselves from making contact to sentient species (other than for food/tools/slaves).¹

The Elves have tried to retake Algorn's Last Stand (since 1192 AC, 8 attempts) but so far failed due to the strategic tactics of the clever Bugbear King Ushurpurs. The magic point has completely shut down and any attempt on either side remained unsuccessful. Whether this will remain this way is still unknown.

Humanoids hearing of the success of Shadowdown currently try to reactivate Mithaven, but they seem to miss the knowledge and sacrifices for this tremendous

¹ **Aspis, spiders, scorpions, and other insects;** read the Lowlife chapter from my [Monster Manual compilation book](#) for more information. The Aspis would live in a single lair in the hills North West of Former Feador, as thus further separating the Bugbears from the Imps and humanoids in the East.

magical feat, and fail, every year again, since their first attempt in 1193 AC. Unknown to them is that there is no more soul army of Engledoc who closes the gate from the other side. Their are still guards in Limbo on these locations, but they will most probably have reverted to the primal Wights and/or Wraiths, since the “threat” of closing is almost nil. The few minor gates in Limbo (less than 6, these are the 5% of the gates Engledoc did not close) still existing lead to possible future magic points and can only spontaneously activate due to circumstances on the Prime Plane in the Canolbarth itself.

1208 AC, SUMMER:

The ragtag group of adventurers led by Talyn Grunalf, who ventured against the Dark elves find a miles long, centuries old tunnel. The tunnel holds remains of the great Shadow Elf invasion 1007 AC. Investigating further, (leaving Doak to return to New Canolbarth) they come to a dead end. The wall clearly reveals molten reshaped stone, probably with the use of magic. A well worded Disintegrate spell allows them to continue, and exit within the fungal woods west of Black Lake. A few feet away they discover the bleak bones and corroded armor of an Elven warrior, with his right arm and index finger pointing straight at the cave entrance. In the upcoming weeks it is discovered that the Mithril Sword bears a name; Engledoc Dewsap. Talyn can't hold her tears, more than 200 years she felt his support in her goal to restore the Canolbarth, now all is at the end, all has done what they could have done. The ruling council finally learns what Engledoc had discovered, and decide to make his sacrifice to be remembered. A white alabaster Sarcophagus is created,

emblazoned with the story of his deeds in bas relief pictures. A life-sized kneeling statue erected where he was found, pointing towards the cave. Inside the cave the sarcophagus is placed perpendicular to the corridor, hindering passage beyond. Gates are placed on both ends, warded with magic seals. Henceforth it will be named the Dewsap Cave or Engledoc's Tomb. A final memory for the Hero who did what he could. In his tomb his items are stored. His ring of Djinni Summoning however is merged with the pointing finger of the statue. The Djinn is ordered to take action when needed to do so against the enemies of Alfheim. In the winter of the same year an Angel was seen within the region. Soon thereafter the area strangely became one of the minor magic locations, having a negative effect upon all illusions, invisibility and silence, making them more easily to detect and dispel (except fairies Invisibility to Mortals). Radius of effect; Sphere 200 yards.

FUTURE GAME BALANCE ISSUES

If **Misthaven** would ever be reactivated, the whole region here up to 40 miles away would be clouded in an everlasting moist fogbank (visuals less than 100') as before. This would become a great boon to the Fungii. They would rapidly (less than 10 years) replace all the fallen trees and thus enlarge the fungal forest there. The new Canolbarth border would then be pushed further northwards (almost up to the hills north and east of Misthaven), to the edge of the new forest. However, the area would remain a source of food, predation, and hunting to the high number of humanoids there. Chance this could happen eventually someday is about fifty-five percent per century.

If **Goblin Park** would ever be reactivated, it would become a negative magical point and thus a boon to the humanoids living there. Together with still negative active Stalkbrow, this would increase their hold of this region, becoming a mixture of imps and Humanoids territory. Chance this could happen eventually someday is forty percent per century.

If **Algorn's Last Stand** would ever be reactivated (a very slim chance though) it would cause the region a new area of growth, but not trees, rather bushes, and low plants. With the demise of the forest, by drought, fire and the wood looted from nearby Humans and Humanoids, and the region taken over by the Bugbear Ushurpurs, all seeds of trees or larger plants have completely perished. The region changed forever. However, a "new" magic point would

still benefit all races (Bugbear, Humans and Elves) in a positive way...maybe even enabling a weird truce...for several years. Chance this could happen eventually someday is nineteen percent per century.

Any new Magic points will reflect the happenings creating the point in the first place. the chance of this happening is extremely small, and never near another magic point. It can only be spontaneously created by magic, under special circumstances (Set by the DM...read *Gazetteer 5 The Elves of Alfheim*)

The **Emerlas** thus would remain Humanoid territory, and never return to the Canolbarth. The area would become darker, with glooming dark shadows everywhere. Darker creatures (like Shroud Spiders (see B10-TSR9149-Night's Dark Terror), Shadows and Shadow Wolves) are drawn to the area by the magic of Shadowdown, or even created, and settle between the humanoids (sometimes preying on them). Fort Mealidor became a strong point of knowledge about these vile (not undead!!) creatures, and a great point of defence to the inhabitants of the Canolbarth.

In effect there are now **4 sorts of Shadow Elves** on Mystara;

Evil Shadow Elves mostly called **Dark Elves, or Drow**; Located in Underground in Eastern Broken Lands, Followers of Atzanteotl and the New (former Shadow Elf) Immortal Lolth. Darker skin, lighter Hair, Love for Spiders, Evil to Neutral at best, Neutral to Chaotic. Have normal Elf Wizards, and Elf Clerics with mostly Lolth's spells. They no longer have Shamans, these have become full fledged clerics.

Shadow Wolves

From ST1 *"Up the Garden Path"*

AC3, AV0, HD4+1**, MV 180'(40'),
Att 1 bite, Dm 1d4+special, NA
2d6(1d6), SV MU5, Mr 12, TT nil, IN
6, AL CN, XP 275.

Shadow Wolves are creatures of pure shadow, which can be called into being by powerful magic (in this case the Bad Magic point *Shadowdown*). In appearance, they are very much like normal grey wolves, except that, in bright light, they are slightly translucent. They can only be harmed by magical or silver weapons. In addition to causing damage, the bite of a shadow wolf causes its victims to fade into shadow. In the process the victim loses 1 hp per round and gradually becomes greyer and slightly translucent to onlookers. This fading process continues until the victim is reduced to zero hp, in which case he or she becomes a shadow wolf, or a successful saving throw vs. Paralyzation is made to survive. Additional bites inflicted while a victim is fading do not increase the rate of hp loss. You should keep separate records of *bite* and "*fading*" damage caused to each victim, since the latter is resistant to magical methods of healing, such as cure spells and potions. Two "hp worth" of magical healing are required to restore each hp lost as a result of fading. Victims who choose to rest and recover do so at the normal rate (1 hp per day of rest).

Once a Shadow Wolf only a Wish can reverse the effect. The soul will be released once the Shadow wolf perishes, and can then be reincarnated or pass on, a Raise Dead will only revive the wolf, as it is, like

Driders are a variation of Dark elves.

Shadow Elves often called **Deep Elves**; Located in Shadow Elf Underground Territories, Followers of Rafiel. Pale skin, white Hair Clear Eyes (sometimes Purple skin markings) Have Wizards and Shamans. Neutral but a bit Xenophobic.

Surface Shadow Elves sometimes called **Pale Elves**; In the Canolbarth Forest (especially the Altered Forest and Fungal Forest). Often merging with normal Alfheim Elves. Pale skin, Light hair, but a better tint than the Deep Elves. Darker hair and greenish tint of skin like the Alfheim Elves are also more and more common. Slowly adapting to the sun (In about 1 or 2 generations at most this species will have completely merged and be indistinct from any other surface elves). Followers of Ilsundal and other Surface Elves Immortals, but many also of Rafiel, but much more free and less restricted than the deep elves (it is a declining Faith however). Have Wizards and some Clerics, no Shamans anymore. Neutral and Open.

Schattenalfen; In the Hollow World, Followers of Atzanteotl. Have Wizards and Clerics. Neutral to Chaotic and many also Evil.

A list of Sources referenced for this article can be found on [page 124](#)

the Shadow, NOT an undead. Shadows and Shadow wolves do NOT work together, but will not attack each other or Undead.

A slain Shadow Wolf will, like the Shadow, leave a quickly evaporating ethereal goo, that can be used to restore Strength draining of Shadows, equal to Shadow goo. When this goo is devoured it will restore some of the Strength any Shadow had drained from a victim. Check for initiative for the moment the goo comes into existence (the same moment the Shadow was slain). Each initiative segment 1 strength is evaporated from the goo, and after 1 full round it will be gone. A character gobbling up the disgusting black goo, will be able to restore as many strength as it can consume before it evaporates, but never more than its own body lost, and never faster than 2 + PC's constitution adjustment (never less than 1) in 1 round = 6 segments. Only thus will Strength drained from a spell or item be able to restore a living creature, and not restore the spell or item in question. The goo cannot be stored in any way, but temporal stasis, or setting it outside of time, will prevent it from evaporating. It will further always evaporate unless consumed.

The Stalkbrow Bad Magic Node

Setting the CM5 module 'Mystery of the Snow Pearls' in Alfheim

By DesertNomad

The Mystery of the Snow Pearls is a companion level solo adventure – one of only two ever produced for the original Dungeons & Dragons system. In this game you are a level ten attack rank 'I' elf who goes by the name of 'Christov Yetta', sent out to retrieve one of the magical Snow Pearls that keep your home village safe. All of the text is overprinted with a layer of red static, so the module is navigated with a 'Magic Viewer' (which is a piece of red cellophane) and by moving between numbered sections.

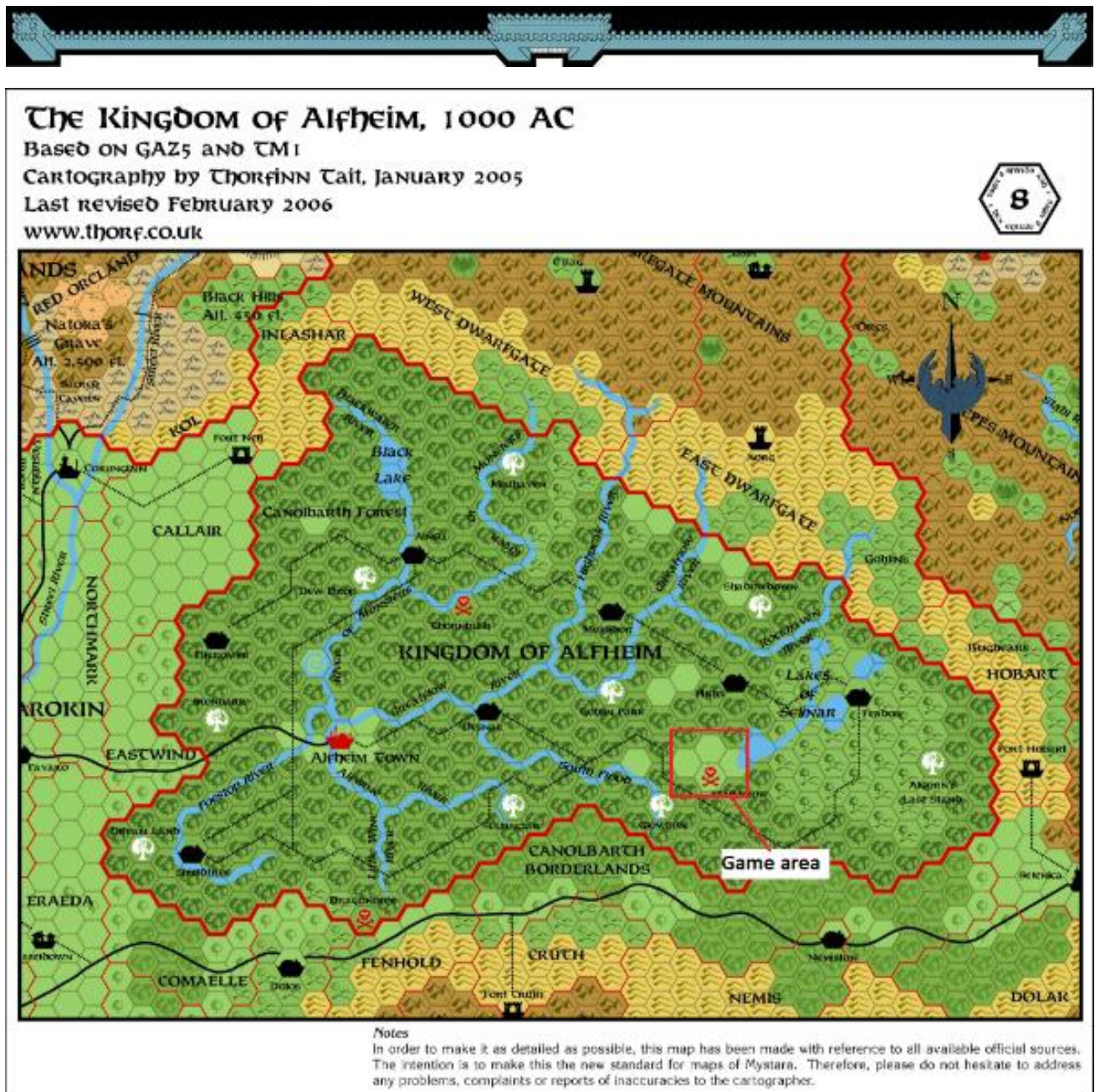
This module has some fantastic locations, locations that have stuck in my memory even though it has been many years since I played the game: The Elephants Graveyard, The Devil's Staircase, Fallen Glory... But it is unfortunately also a module with some pretty cheesy ideas in it. Trolls crying lakes of tears, a troll living under a bridge and anything to do with the annoying Gyerians. Then there are some math problem sections which just seem out of place – all in all a very mixed bag. The idea behind this reimagining is to take the best parts of the module and locate them somewhere in the Known World so the adventure can be more easily used as a one-on-one adventure with one DM and one player.

SETTING THE MODULE IN STALKBROW

The adventure gives few clues as to its location. The map inside the front cover is generic and the geographical features in the module were never mentioned in any other cannon Known World material. The background makes it clear that the village of 'Tarylon the Fair' is in a borderland area since just beyond the village walls there is a wilderness area, but this area also has people living in it and a whole village of Gyerians. The outdoors game map is also very small, just stretching a couple of miles across. I propose that the bad magic point 'Stalkbrow' in the forest of Alfheim be used. This provides a reason for a thriving Elven village to be located close to a dangerous area.

On the next page is a map of the Kingdom of Alfheim showing the location of the Stalkbrow.

A more detailed map of the Stalkbrow bad magic node was made by taking all of the information in the Elves of Alfheim gazetteer, and fleshing out these ideas a little.



THE STALKBROW BAD MAGIC NODE

Stalkbrow is considered by many to be the most dangerous of the three permanent bad magic nodes in Alfheim - these are the places where the dark side of the elven magic that created the mighty Canolbarth forest shows itself by allowing monsters to seep through

from other dimensions and by negatively affecting Elven magic. Although Stalkbrow tends to generate less monsters than Thornbrush and Dragontree, it is famous for creating emanations which interfere with spell casting, and magically spread ideas of evil, mischief or strife among the nearby elves. The elves have therefore learnt to avoid the area, and patrol the borders to stop creatures leaving or unwitting Elves entering.



Stalkbrow Map

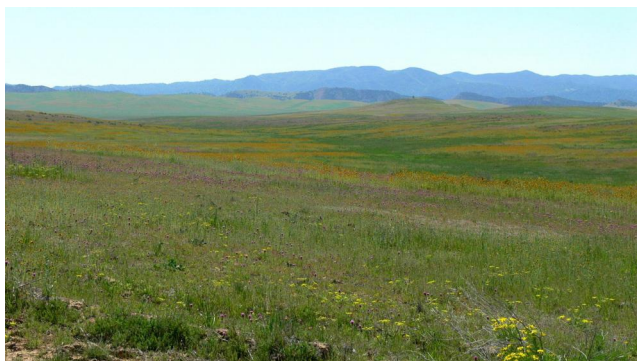
The force that patrols this border is called the Shadowguard, and in addition to elves also includes human wizard and druid volunteers. In fact, many human illusionists are drawn to the job despite the risks to their sanity from long term exposure to the node, since there is much they can learn from the way that illusion magics twist and turn through the area.

Stalkbrow is named because the negative magical effects are centred on two low hills that resemble a pair of brows in a creased frown. Those brave enough to get close to

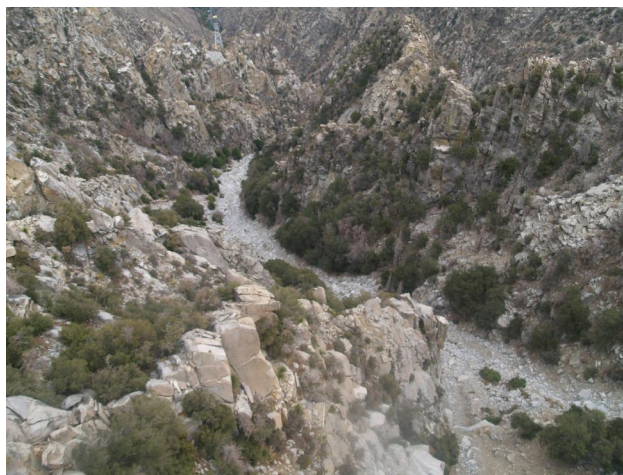
the hills (within about five miles) report that the bad magic point actually drifts, and carries with it a vague mirage-like image of the central hills. To those within this area, it feels as if the hills are actually stalking them - hence the name. This effect also prevents those who are trying to walk to the hills to ever get there. The Stalkbrow hills are only visible out of the corner of your eye and always seem to be off to one side no matter which direction you walk towards them, frustrating any conscious efforts to reach them.

The magic effect extends about 16 miles north to south and 24 miles east to west, with the actual area changing a little day by day as the Stalkbrow effect slowly drifts. Within this area the weather changing magic of the elves is blocked, which means that the original weather patterns of the area are experienced instead. Therefore, the Stalkbrow area still consists of flat to gently rolling scrubland with precious little rainfall. This is quite a novelty for Alfheim, as it is the greatest area within the forest without any of the mighty oaks the Elven homeland is famous for.

On the western side of the Stalkbrow are the **Vorsh Plains**. These are not large, just 15 miles north to south and 10 miles east to west, but they are the best example of what Canolbarth used to be. They consist of arid scrub land covered with dry grasses with a few hardy trees widely spaced apart. This is not difficult country to transverse, although water can be a problem away from the main rivers, but it is wide open country and with the exception of the village of **Gyer**, no civilised creatures live here. There are, however, rumours of bands of outcast elves eking out a desperate existence on the plains, with the area being close enough to the bad magic point to protect them from



Vorsh Plains



The Dry Canyons

their magical brands of exile (as explained below), but far enough away to not cause madness - at least not quickly.

The Vorsh Plains are crossed by several **dry canyons**, cut by the infrequent downpours in this region. These are not well explored (at least by Christov) and can be dangerous due to their steep sides, limiting options for escape and posing a risk for landslide.

The most dangerous area of Stalkbrow is of course at its centre, and consists of the badlands and the hills rising up in the middle of them.

The **Stalkbrow Badlands** are a small area of almost totally arid dirt with small rocky outcrops spread between pancake flat land. Nothing grows here except the occasional tuft of yellow grass.

The **Stalkbrow Hills** harbour the centre of the bad magic effect and consist of a tortured and alien landscape of undulating hills in random patterns and colours. Needless to say, few have ventured into this spot, it is



The Stalkbrow badlands

said that even monsters struggle to survive here due to the magic energies that stream across the surface of the rocks. The hills do have a few trees growing on them in contrast to the badlands below. Stunted and twisted oak trees struggle to the size of small shrubs, as in a sick parody of the huge oaks that grow in the **Canolbarth Forest** a few miles away.

Across the north of the Stalkbrow area runs the **Ragged River**. This is not a large waterway, but it flows with a furiousness far beyond what it should. People say that this is due to the effect of the dark magic from the



Stalkbrow hills

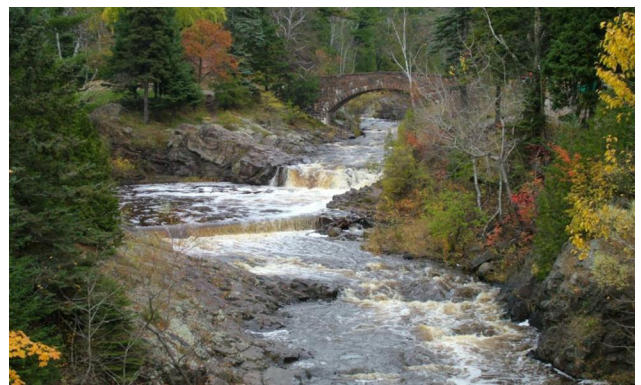
Blighted Forest. Downstream of Gyer, it is only safe to cross at the **Far Delta**. This is an expanse of marsh lands a few miles across, named because it is the delta further from **Tarylon**. The delta is filled with many different types of marshland birds and Christov has often hunted and collected eggs here.

In the south runs the **Black Spring Creek** and its tributaries.



The Ragged River

This small stream used to be crystal clear, but something in the **Blighted Forest** has corrupted it, and now only black, silent water flows through it. The creek empties



The Black Spring Creek

into the lake via the **Near Delta**, which is now a small patch of dark marsh empty of life.



The Near Delta

The **Lakes of Selinar** are famous through Alfheim for their beauty and the giant freshwater pearls that can be found in their waters. The south-western most of these lakes is also the largest, and connects into the other Selinar lakes lying on the boundary between the Longrunner and Feador clans.

The western end of the lake is not an obvious place for settlement due to its proximity to Stalkbrow, but Elves have been visiting this



The Lakes of Selinar

part of the lake for centuries as it contains the best and biggest fresh water pearls that can be found. About 80 years ago four pearls were found of incredible size and beauty - they were about the size of grapefruit, perfectly round and glowed with a dazzling white light when held close to each other. They were named 'The Snow Pearls' due to their exceptional clarity, and it was these pearls that lead to the founding of a new settlement called Tarylon, as the pearls allowed a new sapling of the Tree of Life to prosper despite the proximity of Stalkbrow. Although Tarylon is at least a couple of miles safely outside of the maximum effect of the bad magic node, it was built with an eye on defence. The entire settlement is surrounded by white walls and slim towers, raised entirely with Longrunner magic from the rock beneath the forest. These beautiful shining walls, combined with the blessing of the snow pearls and the great lake have lead to Tarylon being called "**Tarylon the Fair**" by its inhabitants and those who visit.

Perhaps the saddest parts of the Stalkbrow area for an elf are the **Blighted Forests** in the north and south. These are areas of the Canolbarth Forest which have been twisted



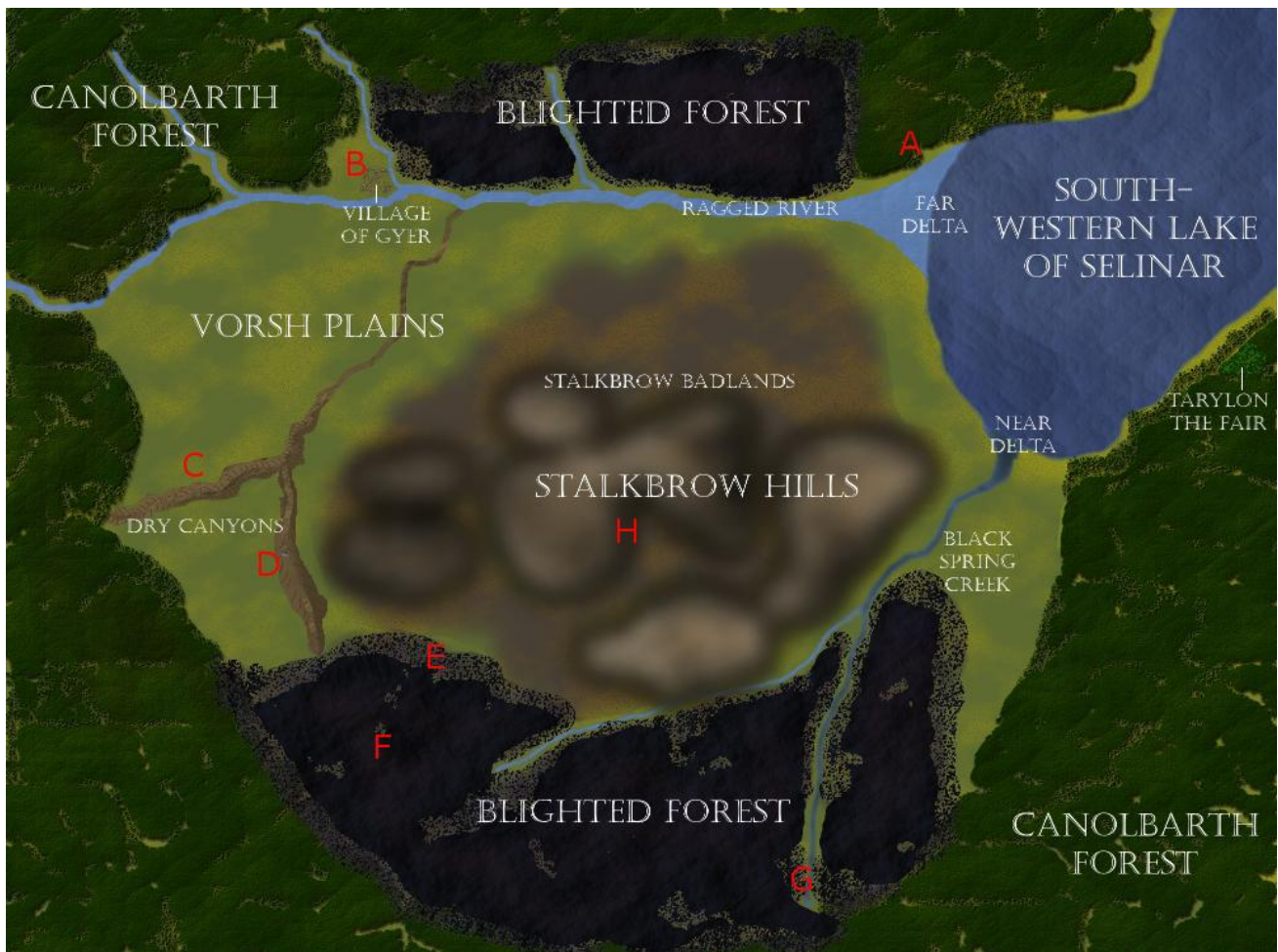
The Blighted Forest

and diseased by the bad magic over a long period of time. No-one knows why, but these areas are slowly increasing in size as the centuries pass. Within them few trees grow, and the trees that are there slowly rot as they are consumed by fungi and disease. The only living things that flourish are toadstools, wood imps and their spider mounts, who seem to have made these black woods their home.

Changing the Mystery of the Snow Pearls Map

The original map is generic and bland, and contains many filler encounters. The map below can be used to take the best locations and place them in the Stalkbrow area.

- A New starting location for the player character (location 1 on the original map)
This is Christov's hut, the small house he has cut out of the forest for himself.



Stalkbrow locations

B Village of Gyer

(location 30 on the original map)

This smelly location is home to about 200 Gyerians - bipedal birds with a moderate level of intelligence.

C Fallen Glory

(locations 9 and 10 on the original map)

This network of caves was home to a small tribe of dwarves back when the Canolbarth area was in its original form of rolling hills. Now it is inhabited by a collection of corrupted plants and animals, with a mad giant as self-proclaimed king.

D The Raker's Den

(location 17 on the original map)

The small collection of caves set into the canyon wall is well hidden from below, and holds a dozen rogue elves banished for committing terrible crimes. Now they terrorise this area.

E The Devil's Staircase

(location 19 on the original map)

In the original module this was a blind canyon with a series of natural steps leading up. A suspicious man asks Christov to retrieve his scarf from the top of the canyon, but turns out to be a devilswine (that's why it is the devil's staircase). Make the staircase a dead and rotting home tree that has been caught up in the blight.

F The Witch of the Woods

(location 16 on the original map)

Despite her hideous appearance this old woman provides details on how to find the missing snow pearl.

G The Spirit of the Black Springs (location 18 on the original map)

The once clean river now flows dark and foul. The spirit of the river has been choked by a rock placed over the spring at the headwater of the stream. Remove this and the river will return to its original form.

H Elephant's Graveyard and the Caverns of Couronn below

(locations 27 and 39 on the original map)

The 'elephant' is a malfera, and a devious enemy. The Caverns of Couronn are the home of the mage who stole the pearl, and consist of three concentric rings. To travel inwards between each ring it is necessary to answer a mathematical puzzle.

Changes to the Mystery of the Snow Pearls Storyline

In the original module the player character (Christov Yetta) is the brother of the Treekeeper, champion of the village and all round good guy. This is functional, but a little dull, so consider this alternate setup.

Adventure Intro

In the Longrunner clan, Elves are named after their actions, and for this reason you have had many names through your long life. First Christov Fleetfoot, for the way you could move through the forest like water flowing through a brook. Then Christov Beastslayer for the way you slew a horde of goblins and orcs when they broke upon the borders of Alfheim. Then you were called Christov Redhair, more for your temperament than your colouring.

But the name you wear now defines you. You are Christov Kinslayer.

It has been ten long years since you were cast out from the Elven realm for the greatest of all crimes. You slew one of your kin in a moment of fury, and for that you were branded an exile. An outsider. A traitor. Even now, you can feel the magical tattoo running down the side of your neck. If you were to return into the forest it would heat, first to a dull yellow that would burn and distract. Then with time to a bright red that would cause pain. And then finally to a white heat that would make you writhe in agony until your flesh was consumed. This mark forces all those who commit the greatest and most terrible crimes in Elvenkind to leave the great forest and never return. But you found another way.

By accident you discovered that the bad magic node of Stalkbrow counteracts the magic of the brand, deactivating its power. Even so, it is a dangerous game to play, because the malevolence of Stalkbrow is known to twist people's minds and make them go wild and crazy. But by staying on the very border of the effect, you have found it possible to keep the brand down to a dull ache, with hopefully little effect on your psyche. But time will tell how successful you have been in this...

You have made a new life for yourself, of sorts. From a hut cut out of the forest you venture into the woods to hunt deer, suffering the brand for enough hours to get fresh meat on the table. You snare small animals for food and fur. You travel into the far delta to find birds eggs. Occasionally you even make forays into the blighted woods and release your anger and resentment on

the evil wood imps that reside in there. Then, in the evenings as the sun sets on your back, you look across the greatest of the lakes of Selinar and gaze upon Tarylon the Fair. And you dream of going home.

It is a cloudy night, with the waning quarter moon unable to break through the clouds and with a slow, teasing wind pushing through the trees around your home. You lie in bed, unable to sleep, thinking about what has been done to you and the injustice of it. Even after ten years, the outrage makes your cheeks hot as you remember the day of your branding and the faces who watched it happen.

Your dour thoughts are interrupted by a rustle in the wind, followed by a gentle thump. You frown as you remember the wards you set this evening, like every evening, around the house. No creature should be able to approach within a hundred yards without you being alerted. But this was much closer than that. After a slight pause, you hear a set of footsteps approaching your home.

Opening the door you see that the arrival is Enan Stargazer, Treekeeper in Tarylon the Fair and also your older brother. He explains that Milgor the Mad, a Alphetian illusionist who was once a member of the Shadowguard, has stolen one of the four Snow Pearls that are needed to protect the village from the corrupting powers of Stalkbrow. Enan says that you should go and retrieve the missing pearl. If you succeed you will be forgiven of your past crime and will be able to return to your old life in the village. So begins the Mystery of the Snow Pearls!

Final Thoughts

By making these changes it is possible to save the most atmospheric and interesting locations in the adventure, and provide a setting and adventure background which make more sense. I strongly recommend anyone looking to a slightly different one-on-one adventure to buy a copy of The Mystery of the Snow Pearls as it is an unpolished gem with some fantastic ideas. You can also [visit the RolePlay Online site](#) where I am running the module and take a look.

The Fall and Rise of the Canolbarth

Continued from [page 114](#)

SOURCE LIST

TSR 1082 Wrath of the Immortals
TSR 9372 Poor Wizard's Almanac 1010 AC
TSR 9441 Poor Wizard's Almanac 1011 AC
TSR 2506 Poor Wizard's Almanac 1012 AC
TSR 2517 Joshuan's Almanac 1013 AC
Fan-based Almanacs (1014-1019 AC)
TSR 9223 Gazetteer 5 The Elves of Alfheim
TSR 9287 Gazetteer 13 The Shadow Elves
TSR 1017 The Immortal Set
ST1 Up the Garden Path
TSR 9494 AD&D2 Ravenloft Audio
Adventure; Light in the Belfry
[Monster Manual compilation books](#) Lowlife and Undead on the Vaults of Pandius.
Compiled by Author.
Engledoc information in [Ainsun article](#) by "Gecko"
[Elven Dictionary](#)
Drider adapted to BECMI Statistics from TSR 2103 -
AD&D 2e Monstrous Compendium 2
Canolbath Forest map in 1 mile hexes by Author (to be released soon).



FROM
THE VAULTS
OF PANDIUS

Vesperlands Atlas

by John Calvin

The bizarre and beautiful setting of the Hollow Moon was first envisioned by Sharon Dornhoff in June of 1998. She imagined that Matera, Mystara's visible moon, was also a hollow shell, much like its parent planet. Yet, while the innards of Mystara are bathed in the red light of an eternal sun, Matera's core is a lightless, shadowy world. Much like the Hollow World, the Immortals have populated the inside of Matera with cultures from throughout Mystara's history¹.

The Vesperlands are located on the southeastern shores of the Spindrift Sea, and

have been the home of the Vesper Elves for thousands of years. These elves, whose ancestors once lived in the fabled city of Aengmor, split from their Schattenalfen cousins when they rejected the patronage of Atzanteotl. For a time they returned to life on the surface of Mystara, near present day Glantri, but small numbers and increasing pressures from surrounding regions nearly drive them to extinction. Inside the confines of the Hollow Moon, the Vesper Elves have recovered from their travails, their society thriving in the darkness.

¹ For more information on the Hollow Moon, see ["Inside Matera: The Hollow Moon"](#) on the Vaults of Pandius, and Threshold Issues #2 and #4.



Map of the Vesperlands Region

REGIONS

The Vesperlands can be broken up into several different regions, each with their own unique terrain features, plants and wildlife.

Sinus Medii

Shorelines along Sinus Medii are more humid than the northern coasts, often causing dense banks of fog to form when the warmer air over the Sinus comes into contact with the cooler air of the coast. Fungal forests tend to be short, dense, and fairly spongy, decaying and growing so rapidly that

paths form through the wilderness like an ever-changing, living maze.

Molds, puff balls, and slimes (both stationary and mobile forms) also abound in the region. Giant communal insects are also common, many of which farm the fungi as their primary food source. Ant and termite species predominate, though there are a handful of smaller (dog sized) wasp and beetle species that also roam the area.

Spindrift Coast

Shorelines along the Spindrift Sea tend to be misty, with regular rainfall throughout the

Materan year. Fungal forests in this area tend to be taller, and more woodsy, giving way to mossy plains in the north, and finally to grasslands (one of the largest true grasslands in the Hollow Moon).

Flowering plants, many of them bioluminescent, dot the plains, attracting many breeds of bees, both mundane and giant. Giant wasps roam the land from Mount Arypag northwards to the coastal waters.

Rima Ariadys

Rima Ariadys is a vast gash that cuts across the Vesperlands from Mare Tranquillitatis to the Spindrift Sea. Rivers pour into it, eventually reaching the seas to the east and west. Crossing is difficult by land, for there are no bridges that will span its width. Mists often bubble up from deep within the gorge and cover the nearby landscape.

Mount Arypag

Mount Arypag is a large volcanic caldera, bordering the northern Ranqal Mountains. Arypag is quite active, erupting like clockwork once every two years. Smoke, cinders, and ash are ejected into the air and blanket the nearby countryside during Fire Times. The violence and destruction intensifies when Mount Arypag's and Mount Kodyn's eruptions coincide, with volcanic blocks smashing buildings, and fires spreading across the inland forests. The giant wasps of the area become extremely agitated during these times, and even the domesticated breeds are difficult to control.

Hypparq Sea

Surrounded by mountains and cliffs along its northern coasts, and by forested hills along the south, the Hypparq Sea is one of the smallest bodies of water in the Hollow Moon to maintain that title. Pines and other conifers dominate its southern shores, while the northern coasts abut against rocky outcroppings of the Ranqal Mountains.

Nixies dominate these waters, making them hazardous for fishermen and merchants alike to ply. Though not directly aligned with Adhuza¹, the nixies enjoy manipulating the elves along their borders, and often constitute a serious threat to Vesper security.

Caldera Horrocks

Although steam and gasses vent from the caldera constantly, Horrocks only truly erupts once every 157 years. The devastation it causes is enormous, but the elven relic-keepers at Angkar use their clan relic to protect the ancient temple from destruction.

Valley of Horrors

A haunted valley full of monsters and worse, the elves avoid this region whenever possible. Still they must be ever vigilant, for madness inducing smokes bellow forth during fire times, and are usually accompanied by attacks by ravenous animals, and horrors that defy description.

¹ A land controlled by the Kopru, Adhuza persisted in various forms on Mystara until BC 1800 when it was placed in the Hollow Moon. Its remnants may still persist in the modern era on the Isle of Dread.

Ranqal Mountains

The Ranqal Mountain range runs through the center of the Vesperlands, roughly dividing the country into north and south territories. High mountain lakes abound throughout the range, feeding many of the region's rivers and supplying many Vesper Elf settlements with water. Few of the peaks maintain any snow, and volcanic activity is apparent throughout the range; hot water springs and gaseous vents are common.

Panthers and other large cats are prevalent, and often roam down into the foothills in search of more abundant prey. Birds and pterosaurs are also present, though many of them are dwarfed in size by the giant wasps that dominate the skies.

Mount Kodyn

Mount Kodyn is situated in the northern edge of the Ranqal Mountains, roughly in the center of the Vesperlands. It erupts once every five years, although very few Vesper Elf settlements are near enough to be affected. Efreet have a small foothold here, possibly an extension of the City of Brass¹. Portals to their stronghold only open during Fire Times, though some stalwart merchants do brave the perils to trade with the creatures.

¹ More discussions regarding the City of Brass may be found at [The Piazza](#) in the City of Brass thread by ripvanwormer

Vesper Nobility

There are several titles used by nobility in the Vesperlands. Tuhktyn is the highest title, equivalent to a king or queen (it applies equally to both sexes). The title is taken by leaders who hold authority over multiple clans, and in fact a Tuhktyn must renounce membership in the clan of their birth, effectively making them clanless. Only the largest city states are ruled by Tuhktyn.

Beneath the Tuhktyn are the Piltyn, equivalent to a landed lord or lady, who is typically the head of an elven clan. In some cases a Piltyn may be the vassal of a Tuhktyn, however there are also Piltyn in the Vesperlands who do not recognize any higher authority. Many of the smaller city states are ruled over by a single Piltyn.

Calpollyc are family heads, though some of the smaller clans are ruled over by one, rather than a Piltyn. Qalpiltyn is a rare title, not inherited by blood, but rather bestowed on those who show exceptional skill and ability in the martial arts. These elves are the generals of Vesperlands armies, and wield authority over the many fortifications spread throughout elven territory.

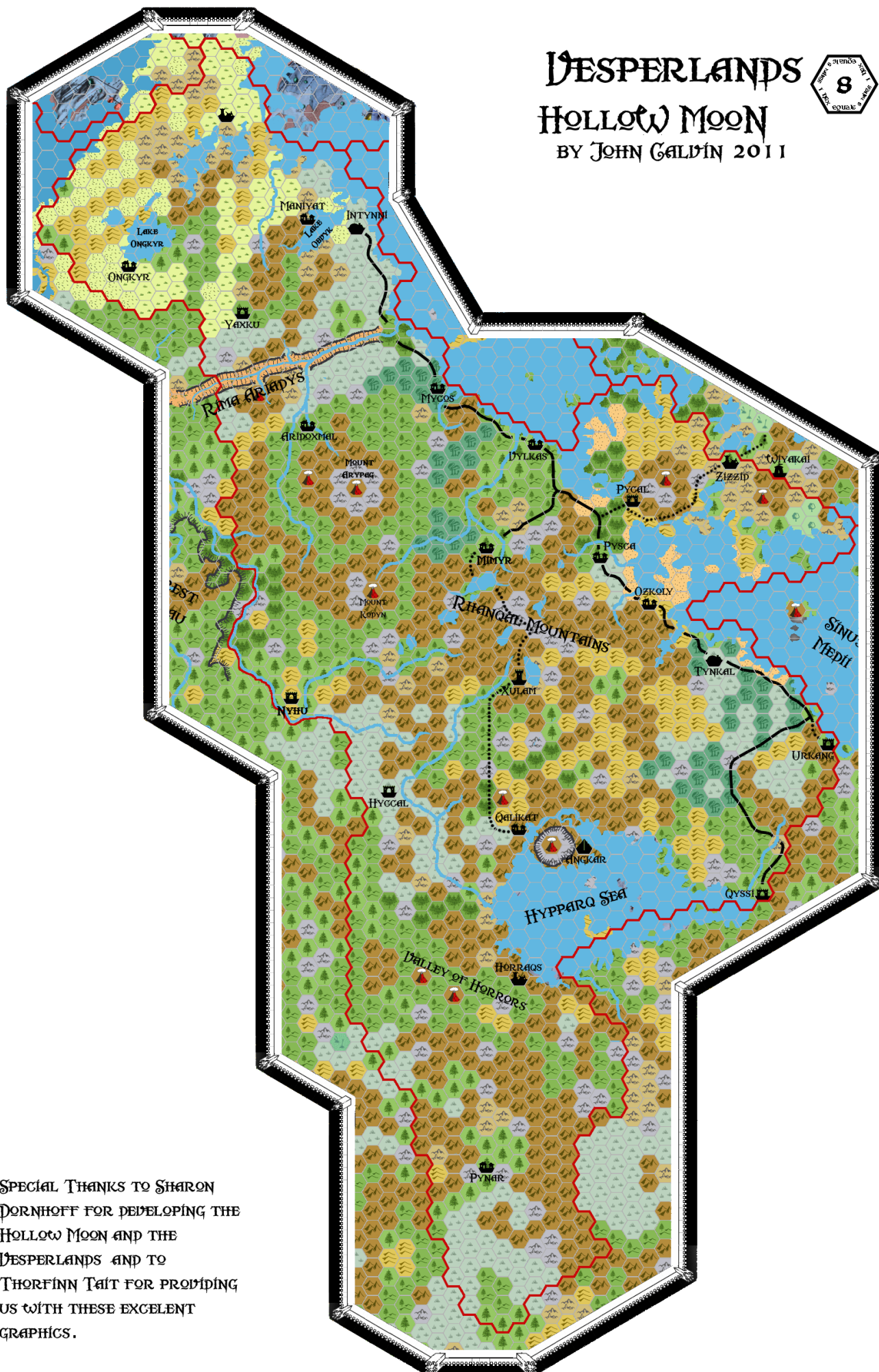


Vesper Elf

DESPERLANDS

HOLLOW MOON

BY JOHN GALVIN 2011



SPECIAL THANKS TO SHARON DORNHOFF FOR DEVELOPING THE HOLLOW MOON AND THE DESPERLANDS AND TO THORFINN TAIT FOR PROVIDING US WITH THESE EXCELLENT GRAPHICS.

CITY STATES

The Vesper elves are organized into several different city states throughout their territory, each controlled by one or more ancestral clans. City states are very competitive with one another, especially those situated along the Sinus Medii. Rivalry amongst the states can become very heated, and even on occasion lead to outright war, though all of Vesper is quick to band together when facing outside threats.

City State of Aridoxmal

Aridoxmal

Population (Village):
4,500 (97% elf, 3% hin)
Max Spending Limit: 5,000gp
Important Figures: Piltyn XXX

The giant wasps that the Vesper Elves ride were first domesticated in this city. Aridoxmal boasts over two dozen hive stables despite its relatively small population, and supplies many other cities in the Vesperlands with their wasp stock. Some of the finest Wasp Knights hail from this city.

Situated between Rima Ariadys and Mount Arypag, Aridoxmal suffers through some of the most frequent, and worst, Fire Times in all of the Vesperlands.

City State of Intynni

Intynni

Population (Town):
60,000 (87% elf, 8% gyerian,
3% human (Albheldri),
2% gnome (Taurus))
Max Spending Limit: 50,000gp
Important Figures: Tuhktyn Kaltyr

One of the larger Vesper cities, Intynni is fairly cosmopolitan by Vesper Elf standards and is comprised of several clans. The city sees trade with the Taurus gnomes¹ and the Albheldri² to the north as well as with Cacklogallinia³ and other nations from the Sea of Tranquility region. Honey is a major trade item, and the city's inhabitants have apiaries set up across the northern plains.

There is a long standing rivalry between Intynni and Tynkal, the dominant southern city state of the Vesperlands. The two cities have been competing over resources, trade routes, and allies for centuries. Intynni is the more militaristic of the two states.

¹ Serraine gnomes travel to Hollow Moon on a rocket ship and settle the Taurus Mountains in AC 42. They are one of the few cultures to actually know they live inside of Matera. See the ["Hollow Moon Timeline"](#) for more.

² The Albheldri are Nithian and Albarendi colonists who traveled to Matera under the guidance of Seshay-Seline in BC 691.

³ Cacklogallinia is populated by gyerians from Davania who were decimated by hivebrood attacks in BC 250.

Maniyat

Population (Village):
9,500 (93% elf, 5% gyerian,
2% human (Albheldri))
Max Spending Limit: 5,000gp
Important Figures: Calpollyc Iyxal

Maniyat is Intynni's gateway to the fertile plains and grasslands of the north, and is known as the breadbasket of the Vesperlands. A handful of small clans dominate the city, each devoted to the art or farming, or crafts that support that endeavor.

Founded on the shores of Lake Obvyk, Maniyat once rivaled Intynni as the jewel of the north, but repeated conflicts between the two settlements eventually took its toll on the city. Now occupied, Maniyat's sole purpose is to feed Intynni's war machine, though not all of its inhabitants are resigned to that fate.

Fort Yaxku

Population (Fort): 3,500 warriors
Max Spending Limit: 1,000gp
Important Figures: Qalpiltyn Hykiri

Fort Yaxku protects the Vesperlands from northern Shaergarde¹, but also guards Intynni's agricultural interests from Ongkyr. Vesper war bands from Yaxku range south from the Rima Ariada to the Spindrift Sea, but rarely venture past the eastern foothills bordering Ongkyr.

¹ Shaergarde hin are placed in the Hollow Moon after the fall of Shaerdon in BC 800.

Union of Mycos**Mycos**

Population (Village): 17,000 (88% elf,
7% human (Albheldri), 5% other)
Max Spending Limit: 25,000gp
Important Figures: Piltyn Syllium

Mycos is a major supplier of fungal goods, specializing in fungal "lumber" harvested from the woody stalks of the giant fungi that grow along the coast there. Fungal purveyors from this region have a mild rivalry with those from Tynkal, although the goods produced in both regions are generally quite different.

Unlike other city states of the Vesperlands, Mycos and Vylkas are ruled over by a council of nobles from both cities. The council is advised by a mystical band of fungal druids² who have claimed the region between Mycos and Vylkas as their home, though some suspect that it is really the druids who are in charge.

Vylkas

Population (Village): 7,500 (93% elf,
4% human (Albheldri), 3% other)
Max Spending Limit: 10,000gp
Important Figures: Calpollyc Parrynn

Though not a sea power, the Vesper Elves do construct rudimentary seafaring vessels to

² See "[Hollow Moon Spells](#)" for more information on the Fungal Druids and their powers. The Fungal Druids are made up from various other races; including: aranea, minotaurs, hin, and rakasta; and compose a distinct population group in the city.

ply the waters of the Spindrift Sea. Vylkas competes with Pysca as the primary sea port and shipbuilding center, though the shipwrights of Pysca are held in higher esteem. Vylkas ships are constructed using fungal logs shipped down from Mycos by coastal ferry.

The Calpollyc of Vylkas and the Piltyn of Mycos rule this region together, in council with the fungal druids of Mycos. Though clans from the two cities have been allies for centuries, the dominant city switches throughout time. Currently Vylkas fills the subservient role to Mycos.

Mimyr

Population (Village): 2,000 (93% elf, 7% shapeshifter)

Max Spending Limit: 1,000gp

Important Figures: Piltyn Shasha

Conquered several times over the centuries by the allied forces of Mycos and Vylkas, Mimyr continuously struggles for its independence. The Piltyn of Mimyr has taken subterfuge and intrigue and made them into art forms, playing the two larger cities to the west against one another. Though their alliance is currently strong, Mimyr ever tests those bonds.

Known as the gateway to Angkar, many elves making the pilgrimage to that holy site start their journey from this city. Not all is as it seems in this secluded mountainous city, for a small community of shapeshifters dominates the nobility here.

City State of Ongkyr

Onkyr

Population (Village): 20,000 (90% elf, 7% gyerian, 3% rakasta (Margasta))

Max Spending Limit: 25,000gp

Important Figures: Piltyn Lakyl

Slightly less prosperous than Intynni, Ongkyr nonetheless has access to farmlands, albeit inferior to those that Intynni controls. They trade with Cacklogallinia, Margasta Tribes¹, and other nations of Mare Tranquillitatis².

Ongkyr, often stages minor raids against Intynni over farmland and apiary rights. Their Wasp Knights are some of the most skilled in the Vesperlands, focusing on surprise attacks and hit and run tactics.

¹ Prehistoric rakasta, the Margasta Tribes are placed in the trifold isthmus between Tranquillitatis, Foecunditatis and Nectaris after being decimated in the wars between the Azcans and Oltecs in BC 2850. See the Hollow Moon Nation Overview <http://pandius.com/hmovervw.html> for more.

² The nations around Mare Tranquillitatis include the Margasta Tribes, Shaergarde, Cacklogallinia, and Maskelyne (a city of living shadows).

Elves of Pynar

The elves of Pynar have been corrupted by magical emanations from the Valley of Horrors. Although some still maintain the appearance of elves, others have been twisted into monstrosities beyond description. Though no two elves are the same, several general classifications can be made.

Elf-ish: Though these elves appear mostly normal, there is always something unsettling about them; the way they move with jerks and twitches, raspy buzzing voices, pointed teeth, or an overly detached demeanor.

Aberration: These creatures have clearly undergone some form of transformation, though they still retain the vague likeness of an elf. Many have faceted eyes, chitinous skin, appendages with too many joints, or mandibles in place of mouths. DMs may use the stats for Hivebrood to approximate the power of Pynar Aberrations.

Vespertaur: Possessing many of the same traits as Aberrations, these creatures also have the lower bodies of wasps, complete with multiple legs and wings. DMs may use the stats for pegatuars to approximate the power of Pynar Vespertaurs. In addition to standard attributes, also give Vespertaurs stingers with a poison attack.

Abomination: The upper echelons of Pynar society are controlled by Abominations, grotesque amalgams of toothy maws and clattering spiny legs. DMs can feel free to use any number of monstrous and otherworldly creatures to approximate the power of Pynar Abominations.

City State of Pynar

Pynar

Population (Village): 4,000 (80% elf-ish, 16% aberration, 3% vespertaur, 1% abomination)

Max Spending Limit: 2,000gp

Important Figures: Piltyn Vzzbyx

Isolated from most other communities in the Vesperlands, and constantly inundated with poisonous madness-inducing smoke from volcanic activity in the Valley of Horrors, the elves of Pynar have been transformed into something insidious. The city itself resembles a hornet's nest - a gigantic version of the hives of wasp mounts used in other Vesper elf cities. The inhabitants of this hive are not wasps however, but the elves themselves.

Those few elves of Pynar encountered by others of their kind are only vaguely disquieting, possessing some traits that hint at an insectoid origin. Deeper in the hive, unseen by outsiders, the true abominations dwell; vespertaur elves that have the body of a wasp and the torso of an elf, elves with four arms, exoskeleton shells, multifaceted eyes, and even worse.

Cty State of Pysca

Pysca

Population (Village): 13,000 (75% elf, 13% human (Albheldri), 6% rakasta (Mauro), 4% human (Varienya), 2% aardovai)
 Max Spending Limit: 15,000gp
 Important Figures: Piltyn Fycal

Ancient elven traditions of seafaring are still held in high esteem in Pysca, where many master shipwrights dwell. Elven captains from Pysca are also renowned for their prowess in sailing the steaming waters of Sinus Medii, and navigating through treacherous tribes of devil fish that dwell within.

Relatively protected by the jagged walls of the Rhanqal Mountains, Pysca is also seen as a rustic backwater; a territory that sees few battles both from within and without. The elves who dwell there are fiercely individualistic and self sufficient.

Ozkoly

Population (Village): 5,000 (97% elf, 2% human (Varienya), 1% aardovai)
 Max Spending Limit: 10,000gp
 Important Figures: Calpollyc Tyssi

Clans of Ozkoly and Pysca have intermarried for centuries, strengthening the bonds between those two cities to the point that Ozkoly is generally seen as an extension of the slightly larger city to the north.

All overland trade to and from Tynkal must pass through Ozkoly, and the city is in fact a center of mercantilism in the region.

Fort Pycal

Population (Fort): 700 warriors
 Max Spending Limit: 500gp
 Important Figures: Qalpiltyn Gyrolloc

Fort Pycal defends the Vesperlands in the northwest, but it also serves as a rustic trade center. Trappers and hunters frequently use it as a base when traveling into the wilds of the Rilles¹, and bands of aardovai traders are not uncommon within its walls. Pycal also sees use as a portage, where small vessels may dock and travel overland rather than risk the (devil fish infested) waters travelling around the Rilles.

City State of Qalikat

Qalikat

Population (Village): 23,000 (95% elf (permanent), 5% other (transitory - pilgrims))
 Max Spending Limit: 15,000gp
 Important Figures: Piltyn Wyxwir

One of the earliest Vesper settlements, Qalikat is the last stop on the road to Angkar, a pilgrimage made by many Vesper elves at least once in their lifetime. Alone in all the Vesperlands, the elves of Qalikat have been

¹ The Aardovai Rilles are populated by an ancestral form of lupin known as aardovai. See Threshold Issue #4, Once in a Blue Moon, Nations of the Spindrift Sea for more information.

able to domesticate several breeds of giant bees that dwell in the area. The honey that is harvested serves as the major resource produced in the area, and is sought after by elves across the Vesperlands as well as by other nations.

Warriors of Qalikat are expert rivermen, and use the waters that wend through the mountains and highlands of the area to great effect.

Fort Hyccal

Population (Fort): 800 warriors
Max Spending Limit: 500gp
Important Figures: Qalpiltyn Murmyr

Elves stationed at Fort Hyccal patrol the eastern borders of the Vesperlands, but in truth spend most of their time engaging the monsters that emerge from the Valley of Horrors to the south. Qalikat sends a constant stream of support, and rotates most soldiers out of the fort on a regular basis, however there is a small cadre of hardened warriors that have made Hyccal their permanent home.

Fort Nyhu

Population (Fort): 450 warriors
Max Spending Limit: 2,500gp
Important Figures: Qalpiltyn Rinnai

Fort Nyhu defends against Shaergarde, but also serves as a trading post with that nation. Goods can be delivered all the way to Mare Tranquillitatis through riverways. Compared to the warriors stationed at Fort Hyccal, those in Nyhu see very little action. Some consider being stationed here a punishment.

City State of Tynkal

Tynkal

Population (Town): 54,000 (88% elf, 8% rakasta (Mauro), 3% human (Varienya), 1% minotaur)
Max Spending Limit: 50,000gp
Important Figures: Tuhktyn Soona

Tynkal is one of the largest Vesper cities, comprised of several clans and ruled over by Tuhktyn Soona. It is a major trade center for nations of the Sinus Medii, and ships from Adhuza, Mauro¹, and the Albheldri Isles can all be found docked there. Leading inland from the sea is Ancestor's Avenue, a long road with step pyramids of all shapes and sizes bordering both sides; each a holding of the clans represented in the city. At the far end of Ancestor's Avenue is the Temple of Light, the largest pyramid in the city, and the citadel of the Relic Keepers.

In addition to fishing and trade, Tynkal controls the southern fungal plains of the Vesperlands, and fungal farms stretch outward from the city following the Qyssi Road to the south. Conflict with the northern city of Intynni has existed since the founding of that state, however where Intynni is militaristic, the battles waged by Tynkal are fought by its merchants.

¹ Mauro is populated by Pre-Imperial Pateran rakasta who arrived in the Hollow Moon in AC 540. See ["Hollow Moon Exploration: An Outer Moon Timeline"](#).

Fort Urkang

Population (Fort): 2,700 warriors

Max Spending Limit: 1,000gp

Important Figures: Qalpiltyn Uunkys

Fort Urkang guards the coastland trail and northern border with Adhuza, as well as the shorelines of Sinus Medii. Varienyan¹ pirates are rare in these waters, though devil fish² raiding parties are always a nuisance to merchants plying nearby waterways.

War parties of Urkang are always bolstered by Relic Keepers from Angkar, a necessary precaution for a fortress so close to Adhuza. The fort has fallen to that nation and been retaken on several occasions in the distant past.

Fort Qyssi

Population (Fort): 1,200 warriors

Max Spending Limit: 500gp

Important Figures: Qalpiltyn Kylaa

Fort Qyssi guards the southlands and Hypparq Sea from incursions by Adhuza. While its sister fortress Urkang to the north deals mostly with merchants, Qyssi sees increased conflict with its neighbor to the west. Adhuzan pirates from Varienya are common in the waters of the Hypparq Sea, as are forays by the pesky nixies that inhabit those waters.

¹ The Varienya are ancestors of the Mystaran Varellyans, and a client nation of Adhuza.

² Devil fish placed in Sinus Medii and Mare Vaporum, as their society is overrun by a strain of Taymoran vampirism in BC 1650.

More than one occasion has seen the fort fall to nixies, and since those times only female warriors are allowed to man its walls.

OTHER SETTLEMENTS**Angkar**

This is the site where the Vesper Elves found themselves in BC 1400, after being magically transported to the Hollow Moon. Here, the small community of elves found their holiest relic, the Prism of All Colors, and built a mighty temple around it. They called the place Angkar, named after the city of their ancestors, Aengmor. Now it is a holy site, visited by elves throughout the Vesperlands and by other supplicants across the Hollow Moon.

In Angkar, the relic keepers have ruled for over 2,400 years. It is a sacred place to the elves where all internal conflicts are forgotten and no elf may raise arms upon another. It is also from Angkar that the relic keepers protect their homeland from foreign intrigue, especially from Adhuza, for the Prism of All Colors allows the keepers to see things as they truly are. Neither shapeshifters, possessions, nor dominated psyches can escape their gaze, and the keepers recognize them all whenever they are encountered.

Xulam

Xulam is the city of wizards. Many travel through the city on their pilgrimage to Angkar, though few are welcomed to stay for

long. The wizards of Xulam are a secretive bunch, and are determined to rule over themselves. Those that are accepted into the ranks of the wizards must give up all ties to family, clan, and city.

RUINS

Zyzzid

An old troglodyte fortress on the border of the Aardovai Rilles, Zyzzid has stood unclaimed for centuries, though it is far from abandoned. Tales abound of ghostly troglodytes and other undead horrors roaming the crumbling halls. While there may be some truth to those tales, the reality is that they are probably propagated by the bands of brigands and bandits that frequent the ruins.

Dryssek

Once the greatest Vesper city, Dryssek was destroyed by the pteryx¹ in AC 87 during one of their more violent purges in the area. Since then the elves shun the place. It serves as a reminder to them to not grow beyond their means, to not become arrogant and decadent, and to always keep one eye upon the skies above them.

¹ The pteryx are sentient pterosaurs, and contemporaries of the carnifex. They are placed in the Hollow Moon in BC 12,500 after nearly being wiped out by the carnifex. See Threshold Issue #2, Return to the Hollow Moon for more.

HORRAQS

Very little is known about Horraqs. The ruins existed even before the elves arrived in the Vesperlands, and every attempt at claiming them has ended in disaster. Building size ranges from gigantic to the diminutive, causing some to speculate that this place was once a stronghold of the fey. Whether true or not, something much darker now holds sway over these ruins, as guttural cries and shrieks can often be heard echoing off the waters of the Hypparq Sea.

CLAN RELIC

Prism of All Colors

The Prism of All Colors is a large semi-translucent crystal that resides at the heart of a massive stone pyramid in the center of Angkar. It is attended by the Master Prism Keeper and 2-8 acolytes at all times. The Prism exhibits several innate properties which can be experienced by all within a 360 foot radius of the artifact.

Relic-keepers who study the Prism for at least one year become attuned to it, and are granted its innate powers wherever they go. A relic-keeper must make a pilgrimage back to Angkar, and the Prism of All Colors, at least once every Materan year², or lose these powers.

² The Materan year is 18 Mystaran months long. See Threshold Issue #2, Return to the Hollow Moon, for a full description of lunar time and the Materan calendar.

True Color

The true color of all individuals and objects can be seen by anyone within the artifact's sphere of influence. An object's true color is the color it would emit if exposed to white light (something which is not common in the darkness of the Hollow Moon's interior).

True Appearance

An object's or individual's true appearance is revealed while within the artifact's sphere of influence. Shapeshifters appear as if constantly morphing between their different forms. Beings possessed or dominated by another project a ghostly image of the one controlling them above their heads.

Identify Item

Keepers who study an item while within the artifact's sphere of influence are able to ascertain that item's history and associated powers. The older and more powerful an item is, the longer it must be studied. Recent history is revealed before more ancient history, and lesser powers are revealed before greater ones.

Magic Items

Not only does the Prism have innate properties, but the relic-keepers can use the artifact to craft other magical items. A semi-living thing, the Prism grows continuously, and the relic-keepers use this property to great advantage, harvesting crystalline fingers of new growth for use in rituals and to craft magical items. Should too much of the Prism be harvested at once, its powers will cease, at

least until it grows to full size again. It is because of this that the elven relic-keepers only harvest pieces of the Prism at well defined intervals.

Dust of Appearance

Once every month a portion of the Prism may be shaved off. Ground into a powder, with the proper alchemical components and spells, it becomes Dust of Appearance. Each application of Dust can be spread across a 10' by 10' room, and reveals all secret portals, traps, and hidden inhabitants. If directly sprinkled onto a creature, the dust mimics the *true appearance* effect above.

Oil of Color

Every year one vial of Oil of Color can be collected from the Prism. The vial of Oil can be cast and produces the same effect as a *prismatic sphere* wherever it hits. In addition, Oil of Color serves as the main component when producing other magical items (such as Elven Helms, and Aurora Clippers).

Elven Helm

An Elven Helm is a light helmet made of silk and hide, with a leather eye guard built into the face. Oil of Color is used in the creation of these magical items, binding the helms with the powers of the Prism of All Colors. The wearer of the helm has vision as if he area being looked upon is bathed in white light. In addition the helm reveals all shapechangers and individuals who suffer from possession or domination magic.

Aurora Clipper

Every 100 years the Prism has the ability to create an Aurora Clipper, a ship of light that travel through the moon's firmament as if sailing through water. An Aurora Clipper can carry up to 10 elves. It is constructed of the finest silk, and must be soaked in 100 vials worth of Oil of Color for a full Materan year before it is firmament worthy. Such vessels are kept under the care of the relic-keepers, except under the most dire of circumstances, when they may be lent out to adventurers on important missions.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

Reclaiming Dryssek

Calpollyc Skaryl, a disenfranchised Intynni noble, and his followers have decided to reclaim the abandoned city of Dryssek and rebuild it as a power base. The PCs may either be a part of this expedition, or sent by others to put a stop to it. Pteryx automatons mindlessly patrol the city, though their purpose remains a mystery. Should they be disturbed, the pteryx may decide to investigate... and perhaps even to begin a new purge.

Plague of Pynar

Poisoned smoke from the Valley of Horrors has been drifting northward for months; normally an event that happens once every two to three years. As the smoke begins to affect the populace, the PCs are sent to the Valley of Horrors to investigate. There they

discover that elves from Pynar have gained control of the volcanic vents and sent the deadly gasses across the rest of the Vesperlands. The PCs must put an end to their plot before more elves succumb to aberrant transformations.

True Love

Qalpiltyn Uunkys has recently been staging raids against the fortress of Qyssi on the shores of the Hypparq Sea. Such a rivalry will quickly destabilize the region, allowing potential rivals like the nation of Adhuza to take advantage of the elves. Unknown to all, Qalpiltyn Uunkys' strange behavior is due to his love for the nixie queen of Hypparq. Because his love is genuine, the magic of the relic-keepers has not been able to divine the deception.



Savage Seas: Pirates, Corsairs & Buccaneers

“Fifteen men on the dead man's chest-
Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!”

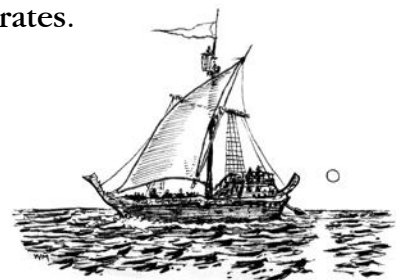
by Giampaolo Agosta (Agathokles)

In this article, I will try to cover a topic that is overlooked in the Savage Coast books: pirates and corsairs. While the Savage Coast tells us much about piracy, and introduces several swashbuckling corsairs, it doesn't give as much of a coverage of this issue as it gives to other aspects of the Coast.

In the rest of the article, I will give a brief coverage on what Pirates, Corsairs and Buccaneers are on the Savage Coast and what character kits and races can be used for piratical PCs and NPCs. Then I will review the areas of this region where Pirates, Corsairs and Buccaneers can be found, and close up with some sample NPCs and adventure hooks.

PIRATES, CORSAIRS & BUCCANEERS

The seas and wilderlands of the Savage Coast are rich in dangers, first of which are outlaws. There are two main types of sea-based outlaws: pirates and corsairs. Another type of outlaw, the buccaneer is also closely related with pirates.



Pirates

Pirates are outlaws of the high seas. Their ships prowl the trade routes of the Savage Coast looking for merchantmen to plunder.

Pirates work in groups large enough to man a ship, but only rarely two or more ships will cooperate. In fact, each crew answers only to the captain, which is usually elected by the same crew. Therefore, it takes a lot of diplomacy for even the most powerful and successful pirate to lead other captains to cooperate. When a new ship is captured, the crew might be asked to join the pirates. In this case, the crew divides between the available ships, and each crew elects its captain.

A pirate ship usually recognize only two officers: the *captain* and the *quartermaster*, though other specialized roles do exist. As the captain, the quartermaster is also elected by the crew, and acts as a spokesman for the pirates, ensuring a degree of “democracy” against the autocratic rule of the captain. The quartermaster is also more likely to be a sailor and a navigator, while the captain is more of a battle leader.

Pirates divide the plunder in equal shares¹ tend to spend their share of plunder quickly, usually in drinks, women and the like. However, the more successful pirates are those who keep their money in sight of retirement. These characters sometimes hide their treasures in secret locations.

¹ Though officers get double shares, and other conventions can be found depending on the individual ship.

Corsairs

Corsairs, or Privateers, are seamen who have been issued a *letter of marque* from a state. The letter of marque states the terms in which the privateers can “legitimately” attack another ship. Usually, this means that the privateer ship can attack ships from nations that are at war with the power that issued their letter of marque without fear of retribution from that power. Of course, the victimized nation will often consider the privateers as pirates, and not extend to them the rights of war prisoners, in case of capture.

While pirates are governed by a sort of democracy, privateers are organized more as a military or mercantile ship, with the owner (be it a nation or individual) selecting a captain (often the owner itself) and paying a salary to the seamen. “Requisitioned” goods may be shared or kept by the ship’s owner, depending on the privateers’ contracts, but a middle ground is common.

Privateers sometimes double as merchants or supplement a nation’s navy.

Buccaneers

Contrary to Pirates and Corsairs, Buccaneers are not seafarers. Rather, they are poachers or simply hunters that live in wilderness areas near the sea. They hunt buffalos, aurochs or other similar prey, eating the meat and selling the hides for weapons, alcoholics and other goods that they cannot produce.

They sometimes provide help to pirates or corsairs, either by trading supplies for stolen

goods, or by enrolling in pirate crews, or by joining pirates in individual operations - especially attacks to plantations or even towns. Other buccaneers may manage to get a small ship, and act as pirates for a while.

The buccaneers are less organized than either pirates or corsairs, since they are not constrained to a ship. The basic social structure of the buccaneers is the mates' pair: two buccaneers (often an experienced one and a newcomer) bound themselves as mates, sharing all properties. If one of a pair dies, the other inherits all properties, and can select a new mate.

Buccaneers are a rough lot, more akin to the Gaucho than to the Swashbuckler. They rarely have spare money or great treasures, which is the reason why sometimes they join pirates. However, they are great hunters and exceptional snipers. Due to their limited resources, they are often forced to rely on older weaponry, such as arquebuses or matchlock muskets.



CHARACTERS OF THE SAVAGE SEAS

In this section, we describe the characters that belong to the three groups, in terms of AD&D 2e classes and kits.

Character Classes & Kits

The Savage Coast Campaign Book presents a single kit that can fit for piratical characters, the Swashbuckler.

Swashbucklers, however, represent only a fraction of the possible pirates, corsairs and buccaneers. Other kits are needed for these characters.

A word is also due on the Red Curse: many Pirates and Corsairs are not affected by the Curse, since they spend most of their time on the ships. Those who are cursed, though, prize Cynnabryl high: the news of a ship carrying the precious ore can move these pirate to foolhardy actions, and prisoners are always stripped of their Cynnabryl.

Buccaneers, on the other hand, often live in the cursed regions, and are very likely to be affected by the Curse. Few have access to clerical aid, and Cynnabryl is costly, so many Buccaneers suffer from Affliction, making them even more sulky and less communicative.

Pirates

Swashbuckling pirates are possible, and even common in Vilaverde, but the less glamorous

pirates should be portrayed through different kits.

The *Pirate* from the CFH and the *Buccaneer* from the CTH can fit this role. Note that the latter kit has nothing to do with actual buccaneers. The *Pirate* kit from the PO:S&P is another viable choice.

However, it is also possible, in the Savage Coast, to find pirate wizards and priests - since many pirate ships begin their careers after a mutiny, the ship's priest or wizard may well be involved.

Corsairs

Corsairs are typically *Swashbucklers*, though privateer ships may well include other character types, especially Myrmidons, if the privateer has close connections with a government.

Pirate kits can also be used for less savory privateers.

Buccaneers

The *Buccaneer* is often a Ranger, though a Fighter or Thief can fit the role, especially for non-Good Buccaneers.

Races and Nationalities: the Buccaneer can come from any society that knows the use of firearms: the Savage Baronies, Bellayne and Renardie are acceptable.

Requirements: there are no gender restrictions, and no alignment restrictions as well, though few Buccaneers are Lawful. The Buccaneer must be hardy and have a good aim, so Constitution and Dexterity scores of 13 are required.



Class Modifications: there are no class modifications, except for Thief Buccaneers who have a penalty of 10% to Pick Pocket and Open Locks, and a bonus of 10% to Move Silently, Hide in Shadows and Hear Noise, but only in wilderness settings.

Weapon Proficiencies: the Buccaneer must take proficiency in the arquebus or musket, and specialize if Fighter. Another initial proficiency must be spent on the knife. Other typical weapons include the machete, hand axe and cutlass, as well as the belt and horse pistol.

Non-weapon Proficiencies: bonus proficiencies are survival and hunting. Required proficiency is fire-building. Recommended proficiencies include alertness, set snares, gunsmithing, boating, cooking, endurance, tracking, orienteering and herbalism. The Buccaneer cannot take the etiquette proficiency at the beginning of the game.

Equipment: the Buccaneer does not use heavy armor - actually, he usually wears no armor at all, since it is costly and interferes with his hunting and survival skills.

Special Benefits: the Buccaneer receives a bonus of +3 to his survival rolls in his home environment. Moreover, he receives a +1 bonus to hit rolls with a arquebuses and muskets.

Special Hindrances: the Buccaneer is considered at best coarse, at most a dangerous criminal, in civilized environment, and a weird outsider in primitive societies. Therefore, he receives a -3 penalty to reaction rolls in these cases. Moreover, the Buccaneer is usually poor (see below).

Wealth: the Buccaneer receives a firearm, a knife, plus another weapon, and up to ten useful items - mostly scavenged or bought from pirates or Traders. He only starts with 1d6 dies in small change.

Character Races

Pirates, corsairs and buccaneers in the Savage Coast come from the Savage Baronies, and therefore can include humans and demihumans as well as Lupins, or from Bellayne or Renardie.

The people of Eusdria sometimes performs raiding or piracy, and Eusdrian pirates are not uncommon, even though they should be treated more like Northmen sea raiders. There are also many Hulean and Traladaran pirates and the Traladaran City-States also sponsor privateers.

Among the more monstrous races, Orcs of the Dark Jungle are fearsome pirates, but they are too primitive and fall into the range of the Savage Warrior rather than the Pirate.

The piratical culture has influenced other, more primitive races, such as the Neshezues.

PORTS OF CALL & BUCCANEER COVES

This section describes the regions of the Savage Coast most likely to host pirates, corsairs, and buccaneers.

Pirates of the Eastern Gulf

The eastern Gulf of Hule has several good ports for pirates, and all major trade routes between the Savage Coast and the Known World lay along its coastline. Moreover, the City-States sponsor privateers.

Hulean Pirates

Hule sponsors pirates through the Bleak League, a crime network. They are openly based in the Hulean ports, though Vilaverdan and Texeiran navy ships sometimes launch punitive raids, burning the ports and sinking the Hulean ships, pirate or not.

The Hulean government never recognize its pirates as privateers, and these pirates never acknowledge the rules of war.

Hulean pirates are even more colorful than their Guardianio counterpart, with flashy

clothes and extensive piercings, though they lack panache - few Swashbucklers can be found here.

Zeren "Blackbeard" Tural leads the Hulean pirates from his base in Boyazka, and answers to the leaders of the Gulf Wing of the Bleak League, the Basgil family.

Zeren Tural:
Human (Hulean) Pirate
F9, CE.

The Sea Powers

Of the so-called Sea Powers, Vilaverde is a veritable haven for pirates. Even its merchantmen double as pirate ships and its aristocracy is composed of successful pirate captains.

Texeiran privateers, on the other hand, play more by the rules - their government issues letters of marque, usually against Vilaverde, Hule and Narvaez, but open piracy is frowned upon.

The Colinas Grutescas & the Guadalmis

These wildlands on the coast north of Puerto Morillos are home to bandits and pirates as well as some buccaneers who hunt in the swamps.

Pirate crews sometimes hide their loot in the caverns that dot the hills.

Narvaez sometimes launches punitive raids against the Bandits and Buccaneers, though

usually with little success, but otherwise does not seem interested in taking over the region.

Delta de Pozaverde

While Garguña is not a naval power and does not sponsor privateers, the Delta de Pozaverde is a haven for pirates and buccaneers, with its hardly navigable network of channels and swamps.

Much smuggling has been going on between Garguña, Almarrón, and Narvaez.

The Almarrónian Coast

The high cliffs and forested coast of Almarrón, while less than optimal for pirates, are home to many buccaneers.

Also, with its troubled history, Almarrón has always had a large number of smugglers and some privateers, sanctioned by the new Baron or the former dictator.

Dunwick

The Free City of Dunwick, while not directly engaged in piracy, it a neutral port where privateers of different nations can meet. Pirates sometimes can be found, trading their loot, though they must disguise their ships.

The infamous pirate Donovan Keir can sometimes be found in Dunwick.

Colony of the Horn

This Texeiran colony is home to a famous privateer, *Miles Killian o'Kane*¹.

The wooded lands of the region are also home to groups of buccaneers, many of whom are escaped convicts from the local penitentiary. Others are Afflicted who work to pay for treatment in the clinic at Bom Jardim.

Porto Maldição

This seedy domain is a former Vilaverdan colony, which declared independence during the Wrath of the Immortals. It covers a large territory on the Arm of the Immortals, but most of it is wilderness, and the population is only of 8,500, mostly living in the plantations.

Porto Maldição itself is a village of some 600 or 700 people - and one of the worst hives of scum and villainy on this side of the coast. Here can be found a mix of Vilaverdan pirates, Dunwick traders, Torreóner and Krolli² mercenaries, Renardois heretics, Bellaynish outcasts, and jungle explorers. The village also serves as a base for explorers and spies trying to reach Eshu.

Mato Grande, the only other significant urban community, has 300 inhabitants, and is mostly a farming community and a market village, serving as a collection point for the

products of the southern part of the colony. It is also the starting point for the exploratory expeditions known as Bandeiras. The Bandeirantes explore the Western Orclands and the Pântano Podre³, looking for routes to the mountains, where they hope to find gold, silver, or *cinnabryl* mines, and also for slaves among the orcish, lizard-kin, and Gyeran tribes. Many Bandeirantes are explorers and adventurers by trade - Scout Thieves and Rangers - but others are simply people who hope to make the adventure of the life - and usually end in the orcs' pot.

In addition to a large buccaneer population, it is also a note pirate refuge, far enough from the civilized lands to let a crew spend some time while letting their trace grow cool: Porto Maldicao has earned its name for the unusual frequency of shipwrecks - ships attempting to navigate using the stars often are misled, and only experienced pilots can lead a ship safely to the harbour.

The main activities of the colony are a plantation agriculture, hunting, and fishing. Hunters are almost always Buccaneers. They hunt a variety of prey, though the most unscrupulous hunters hunt and kill the *Tigrillo Preto*, a type of savage Rakasta prized for its black fur.

Agriculture is based on large haciendas, which use slave labour extensively. Each hacienda employs a large number of slaves - often more than one hundred, and several overseers. Slaves come from the Savage Coast or even further east.

Small fishing villages dot the coastline. They are inhabited by old explorers, retired pirates, a few escaped slaves

¹ See The Savage Coast Campaign Book for more details on Miles.

² Krolli are a race of lizard-kin native to the Arm of the Immortals. Porto Maldição is a gathering point for Krolli mercenaries.

Porto Maldição is ruled by *Dom Iago*, a Texeiran adventurer who founded the colony more than a decade ago, then switched sides to Vilaverde, and finally claimed independence as Barão de Porto Maldição. He has enrolled the help of 50 Torreóner mercenaries to defend his small fort, and has 15 former buccaneers and 35 scouts on his payroll that run more or less regular patrols, though the “Barony” is certainly too large for them to control. Dom Iago also owns a small warship, which patrols the waters off the colony, looking for shipwreck sites to scavenge.

Dom Iago:

Human (Texeiran) Swashbuckler
Thief 10, NE, age 43.

Preuve

This Renardois colony occupies a large territory in the Arm of the Immortals. A recent colony, it has a single village, Preuve, inhabited by fishermen and farmers. A small fort houses the Preuvois garrison, 40 crossbowmen and 10 musketeers, all veterans, the Governor, and the administrative staff.

Preuve has the highest population of Renardois Buccaneers and hunters, more than one thousand. The rest of the population is composed of plantation farmers that live in farms around the village of Preuve. Many Preuvois Lupins are follower of Pflarr who have relocated in order to escape religious persecution.

Renardois Corsairs often stop at this port.

Richland

This small free city controls a large but savage land in the Yalu Bay, west of the Bayou and south-east of Zuyevo.

It has a population of more than two thousand humans, turtles, and demihumans. Another three thousand farmers, hunters, prospectors and explorers live in the wild lands around the city.

Most businesses in the city are owned by the LB Trading Co., which also runs the government, including the hundred pistol-toting warriors that keep the peace in the city and act as a deterrent against Zuyevan intervention. The Texeiran navy from the Colony of the Horn provides defence for the LB merchantmen.

Buccaneers are common in along the eastern coast, and range east even to the outer ranges of Cay to hunt aurochs - which is cause for a lot of friction with the Cay.

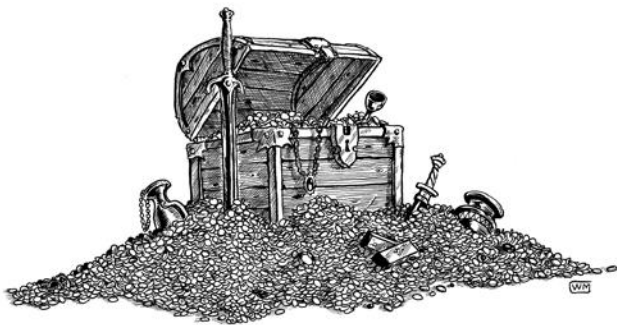
THE CORSAIRS AND THEIR LEGENDS

Many legends have been told in the posadas of the Savage Coast about fearsome pirates and great treasures...

This section describes a group of mysterious corsair, the Three Corsairs, a Lupin Buccaneer, and the tale of a famous pirate, Juanita Alvarez.

The Three Corsairs

The Three Corsairs are the brothers, Kerendan nobles, who have arrived on the Savage Coast circa four years ago¹, pursuing the man who betrayed and murdered their elder brother during the siege of Redstone in the War of the Wrath.



The three brother, using their last funds, had a ship built for each of them, gathered small crews, and started wandering along the coast looking for their enemy. Each of them took on dressing in a single color - green, red, and black. So the Three Corsairs were born.

But their enemy, a Thyatian wizard, had not been idle. Having obtained vast riches from his betrayal, he had bought a new name, Diego de Montelimar, a Vilaverdan title of nobility, and the protection afforded by Torreóner mercenaries.

With this huge advantage, and the power of his magic, he has managed to have the Green and the Red Corsair captured and hanged. The last of the three, the Black Corsair, recovered his brothers' bodies and buried them in the sea just off the Gargoñan coast, in front of the northernmost branch of the Pozaverde. They now haunt the area as

¹ AC 1010

ghosts, while the Black Corsair closes in on the traitor: he knows that his enemy is now a Vilaverdan noble, so he has obtained a Texeiran letter of marque allowing him to prey on Vilaverdan ships. It is said that the success of the Black Corsair is due to a Shadow Symbiont (or perhaps more) he always wears, which allow him to escape Montelimar's magic.

The Black Corsair:

Human (Thyatian) Swashbuckler
Fighter 11, LG.

Diego de Montelimar:

Human (Thyatian)
Militant Wizard 9, NE.

Lope Barrejo

Living in the Almarróñan woods near the frontier with Gargoña, Lope Barrejo is a leader among the Buccaneers of the region. This Ispan Pistolero Lupin dresses in rough leather clothes, with a jerkin of Succulus leather and a wide-brimmed hat. Barrejo has a third eye in the middle of his forehead, the effect of his Affliction with the Sight legacy. When he goes to town - which is only rarely - Barrejo covers his third eye with a bandana. He completes his equipment with an arquebus, a belt pistol, a dagger, an horn full of smokepowder. He has around himself a persistent smell of smokepowder and smoked meat.

Lope Barrejo was born in 961 AC in Almarrón. As a young Lupin he was a soldier in the Almarróñan army, and took part in the revolution of 980, when the noble family that ruled the country was ousted by the

commoners after the disastrous war against Gargaña and the secession of Cimarron. However, he was quickly disappointed by the new republican leaders, so he left the army and became a professional hunter.

Having seen the effectiveness of the Cimarron firearms Barrejo managed to acquire an old arquebus - he was one of the first Almarroán to own a firearm. When the Alcalde of Ciudad Tejillas took the power, Barrejo was among the first to rebel, refusing to pay taxes to the dictator's lackeys. He took refuge in the woods of the Sierra Borgosa, hunting wild boars and other game, and selling meat and furs to smugglers from Paso Montano and Gargaña. As a testimony of his hunting prowess, Barrejo is one of the few people to have killed Succuli, and even a straggling Herathian Juggernaut.

When the Torreóner mercenaries came to capture him, he led them in a merry chase in the forests, waiting for occasions to take a shoot at the pursuers or at their dogs.

In time, other rebels came to the woods. Barrejo was a natural leader, though not a strong one - he does not believe in authority, and would never gather more men than those who freely came with him. When the Narvaezan alliance threatened the Enlightened States, he led a small band of Buccaneers to join the Saragóner militia.

At the end of the war, he refused all accolades, and went back to the forest. He supported the second revolution that ousted the dictator, and now don Maximiliano, the heir of the old ruling family, has asked his help in capturing don Esteban. Barrejo has agreed to keep an eye open, but will not

commit himself further - not that he likes don Esteban, but he does not wish to get involved with the new government.

Barrejo is a rough Lupin and a tough fighter, not one to allow advantages to an enemy, though he is not without honour or compassion. He is also courageous to the point of being foolhardy - in part as a legacy of his Affliction. Barrejo has a reputation of being an infallible sniper, and entire companies of Torreóner mercenaries have come to fear his arquebus.

Lope Barrejo

Lupin (Ispan Pistolero)

Buccaneer Ranger 10, CG, age 47.

La Tortuga¹

Some twenty years ago, a couple of pirates, Juanita Alvarez, a rebel fighter from Narvaez and Nureddin Blanco, a Saragóner adventurer, became famous in the Gulf of Hule for their daring attacks to Hulean and Narvaezan ships, and for their ability to escape all pursuivants.

Their ship, "El Rayo", disappeared a decade ago, but their secret harbour - which was supposed to hold great treasures - was never found, even though the small islands of the eastern coast of the Gulf of Hule have been thoroughly searched by treasure hunters. Among the treasure collected by Alvarez and Blanco was also a scroll that was said to come from the lair of a green dragon in the

¹ An adaptation of the short adventure "Terrapin Isle" from Corsairs of the Great Sea

Dark Wood and to hold secrets vital to the Master's servants in the Tower of Azurun.

Many still search for these treasures, but no treasure hunter will find them in the Gulf of Hule: the harbour was built on the shell of a Zaratan, a giant turtle, which slept and drifted in the sea. However, at the time of the disappearance of "El Rayo" and its crew, the Zaratan suddenly awoke and dived, dragging the pirates in the water, where most of them drowned.

Juanita was among the few survivors, and managed to reach the coast. She is now a simple fisherwoman in the Isla del Cayo off the coast of Gargaña.

The Zaratan, called "La Tortuga" by the crew of "El Rayo", resurfaced only recently, off the coast of Dunwick. However, a deadly danger awaits any would-be treasure hunter: Nureddin Blanco, driven by his sense of guilt for not having foreseen the awakening of the Zaratan - he was the ship's sage and wizard - and therefore having caused the death of his crew and his lover - he does not know that Juanita survived - has returned as one of the living dead, a fearsome ghost that kills his victims by choking them.

The Zaratan is also known to the Free Tortles and the Clau-rin, who consider it an avatar of Mother Ocean. However, they will not divulge any information about the Zaratan's location to people they do not trust.

Juanita Alvarez:

Human (Espa)

Pirate Fighter 9, TN, age 53.

REFERENCES

RPG SOURCES

Savage Coast Campaign Book

Savage Coast

Monstrous Compendium Appendix

Orc's Head

Source of information on the less civilized areas of the Savage Coast.

Gazetteer 4: Kingdom of Ierendi

The best source on piracy in the Sea of Dread

Corsairs of the Great Sea

From the Al Qadim campaign, Sinbad-style adventures for Arabian corsairs that can be adapted to the Savage Coast with some effort.

Pavillion Noir

A French RPG about Pirates: nice reading on pirate-based campaigns.

Complete Fighter's Handbook (CFH)

Source for a Pirate Fighter character kit.

Complete Thief's Handbook (CTH)

Source for a Buccaneer Fighter character kit.

Player's Option: Skills & Powers (PO:S&P)

Source for a Pirate character kit available for different classes.

The Bleak League by C. Constantin

The Hulean crime syndicate sponsors hulean pirates.

Other Sources

R.L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island*

It's simply impossible not to include this book in any work on pirates!

E. Salgari, *Il Corsaro Nero*

Source of the Three Corsairs story, and one of the most popular books on corsairs in Italy.

B. Larsson, *Long John Silver*

More than a retelling of *Treasure Island*, this great novel builds a pseudo-biography of Long John Silver - one of the major sources of this article.

OldDawg Presents: GazF



Continuing the
Gazetteer Tradition Beyond
the KNOWN WORLD



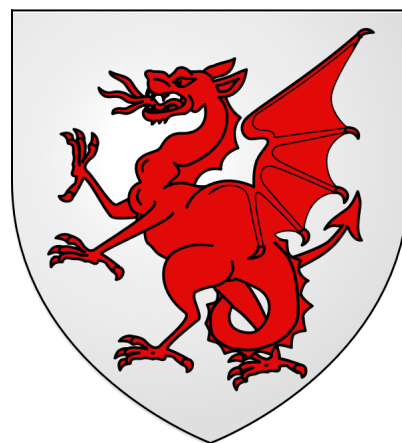
...at the Vaults of Pandius
<http://www.pandius.com>

Mystaran Almanac AC 1019



...at the Vaults of Pandius
<http://www.pandius.com>

Who's Who in the Wyrksteeth part 3



Wyrksteeth Coat of Arms

Humans, Demihumans, Humanoids and others!

by Francesco Defferrari
(Sturm)*

* This article follows the In the Name of the Dragon adventure published in issue #7 of Threshold and the Who's Who in the Wyrksteeth" part 1 and part 2 articles published in issue #8 and #9 of Threshold magazine, which described the dragons of the Wyrksteeth kingdom and Norwold and the dragons of the Outer and Hollow worlds. All these articles were inspired by and partially borrowed from the Wyrksteeth writings by Giulio Caroletti and John Calvin and the Dragonlord trilogy by Thorarinn Gunnarsson, who however bear no responsibility for any gratuitous changes I made to their original material.

"In the shadows of dragons we live well and prosper. We are much more secure than many other folk of Mystara. Contrary to common rumours, we do not have to sacrifice our children, not even cows. Why should a race as ancient and powerful in magic as the dragons need others to provide them food? They are much better than humans and demihumans in growing and breeding food. So we never suffer hunger, and we also have much less injustice and crime than any other society in the world. Contrary to common rumours, we do not work as slaves for our draconic masters. Why should dragons need humanoids to do things for them? There is very little they cannot do better with their own skills. As dragons do not bother much with day to day activities of the humanoid races, we are also much more free than those who have to serve human barons and kings. But we, and the dragons, prefer to let the rumours run wild. If all the world knew how good our life is here, the Wyrksteeth would get much too crowded very fast."

*Jacob Aloysius,
in a private letter to a friend in Glantri.*

THE MANY RACES OF THE WYRMSTEETH

As explained in issue #7 of Threshold magazine, page 189-191, several different races¹ inhabit the Wyrksteeth Dragon Kingdom. Some representatives of these races will be described in the following article, but there are many other important figures in the kingdom not described here, so each DM should feel free to create more Wyrksteeth characters.

DRAGONS, SCIONS, WYRMSINGERS AND VASSALS

Almost all the Wyrksteeth population lives under the Shadow of a Great Dragon. The Great Dragons of the Wyrksteeth Kingdom, like those described in issue #8 of Threshold magazine, rule over several other dragons and over humanoid communities as feudal lords. The relation between a Great Dragon and his or her vassals however only seems similar to a feudal relation. The relations between the dragons are better explained in Threshold issue #8, page 145. **The Great Dragons**, who number around 40 in the Kingdom, are those who rule over a Domain which can vary from a 10 miles to a 50 miles radius. The most powerful of these Great Dragons² are *Verslen*, *Pradapukran*,

Eruptaar, *Xanesb*, *Jberdar*, *Medyanka*, *Hk'rbal*, *Klaki*, *Marthaen*, *Tugar* and *Ferrimyx*, and the other remaining 30 or so Great Dragons are vassals to one of them. In their Domain, all the 40 or so Great Dragons have several more **Lesser Dragon** vassals, normally from 20 to 200 (including cubs and youngsters), and from 5'000 to 50'000 vassals of other races. Around 1% of these vassals are normally **Scions**, Dragonborn who have been sired directly by a dragon or descend from a dragon. Traditionally a dragonborn receives a special gift (a magical object) from his or her dragon parent, grandfather or ancestor. Another 1% are the **Wyrmsingers**³, creatures of any race who received special objects and powers from their Dragon Lord, usually to perform some duty. There are also three specialized orders of Wyrmsingers in the Wyrksteeth (see below). Dragonborn can be Wyrmsingers too. Only the Great Dragons have Wyrmsingers, but Lesser Dragons too may sire Dragonborn. As the Great Dragon Lords normally do not concern themselves with the daily administration of a Domain, such duties normally are performed by the Lesser Dragon or, much more frequently, by Dragonborn and Wyrmsingers. The latter are normally the effective rulers of the large and small communities in the Wyrksteeth Kingdom. Almost all the inhabitants of the Wyrksteeth Kingdom are vassals to some Dragon, a fact not widely known outside the Kingdom. Every **vassal** of the Dragon Lords normally has a tattoo that bestows a special power or a minor resistance, usually related to the

¹ Some of them, as lizardkin, dragonkin, werecreatures, dwarves and humans, were already detailed in the [Wyrksteeth Gazetteer](#) by Giulio Caroletti. The notes will indicate when a character comes from an existing source.

² The following dragons were described in Who's Who in the Wyrksteeth part I, in

[Threshold issue #8](#). Dragons' names will be in italic in the text to make them easily recognizable.

³ Wyrmsingers were created in "[New prestige class - Wyrmsinger](#)" by John Calvin.

Dragon. A Red dragon's vassal could have, for example, resistance to fire or create fire as a special power. Such a tattoo is usually made when the person comes of age, a year which may vary depending on the race and the community.

Great Dragons commonly divide their Domain among their dragon vassals, who have the right to hunt in their assigned territory. Hunting for Wyrksteeth dragons is less usual than commonly believed by outsiders. Many dragons hunt only if there is an overpopulation of some animals, and normally eat domesticated animals and cultivated plants like all the other intelligent races. Dragons also create or cultivate food by magical means, so famine is unknown in the Kingdom.

Neither the Great Dragons nor the Lesser Dragons demand tribute from their vassals, but they do receive a part of the Kingdom's taxation, which is probably one of the lowest in Mystara (around 10% of the income, which however increases for larger incomes). The Dragons also own all the mines of the Kingdom. Taxes are used to maintain basic public services, mostly healing and schools. The defense of the Kingdom and the maintenance of order inside it, however, is handled by the Lesser Dragons directly, and by the Wyrmsingers who command the different branches of the army. All vassals must participate in the defense of the Kingdom if called by the dragons.

The **Army** is divided into seven different corps:

The First Legion, with blue, grey and white uniforms, has the task to defend the Kingdom's cities and towns, and maintain the order inside them.

The Second Legion, with red and gold uniforms, is tasked to fight in hills and

mountains, maintain the aerial force (mounted on dragons and wyverns) and defend the borders.

The Third Legion, with green and jade uniforms, is tasked to patrol the forests and hunt dangerous creatures.

The Fourth Legion, with black uniforms, has the task of surveying swamps and waterways and also to infiltrate foreign nations.

The Order of the Holy Sword is composed of priests and paladins of the dragon immortals and it may have different functions, from aiding dragons to diplomacy, schooling and healing.

The Legion of the Moon is the elite force of the Order, formed exclusively by werecreatures. It is normally employed only against very powerful foes on particularly dangerous missions.

The Red Hammer is an elite force composed mostly of dwarves and clerics, usually tasked with the hunting of traitors, dangerous criminals, renegade werecreatures and undead.

DWARVES, GNOMES, HALFLING

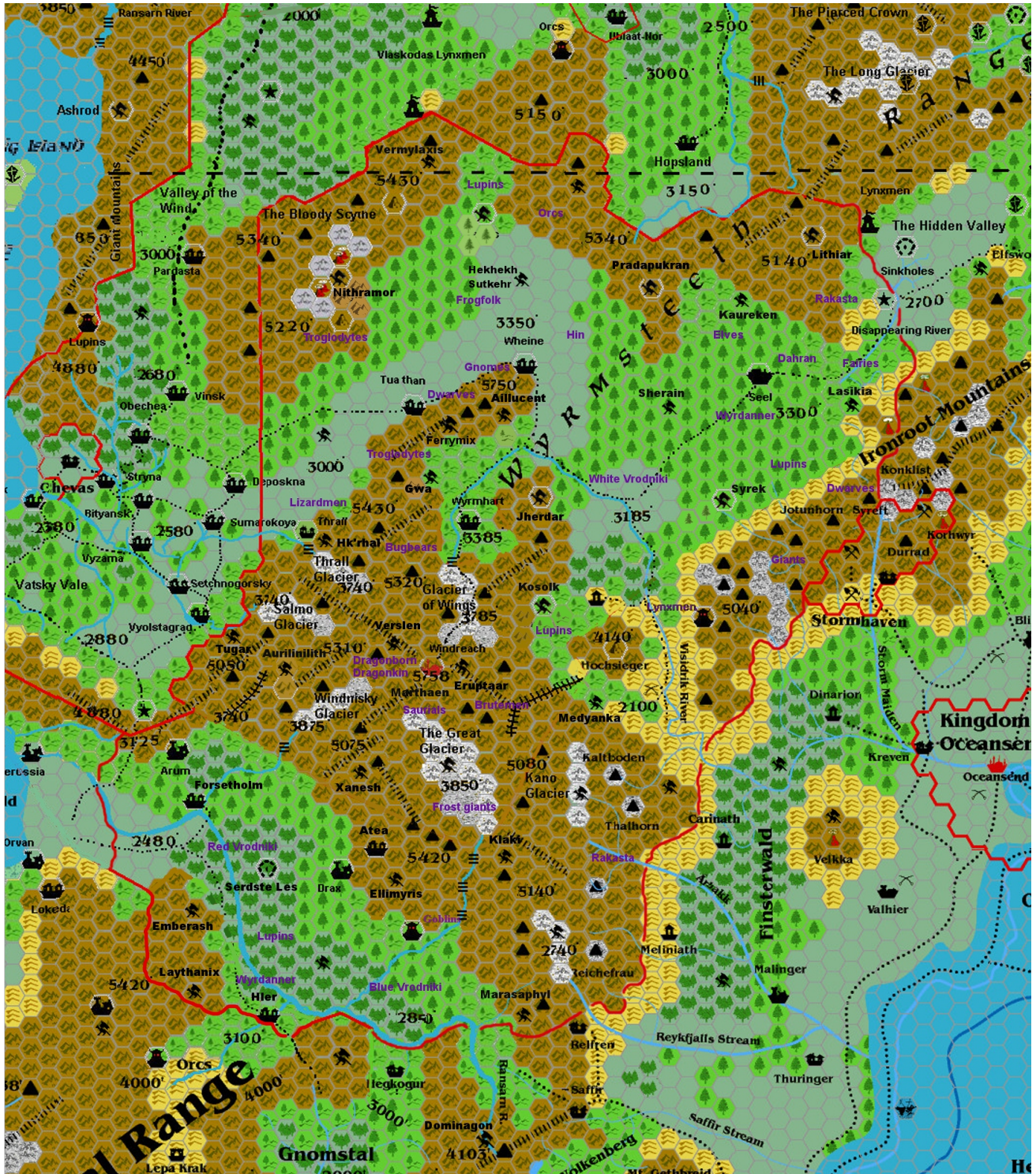
Kirshian Wurunkrest,

Dwarf Warrior 10.

Kirshian is the undisputed clanmaster of the Wurunkrest dwarves. He normally lives in Windreach but he also has a house in Tua'than and travels often all around the Wyrms' Head Mountains¹, visiting the dwarf

¹ For maps of the Wyrksteeth Kingdom, see Threshold issue #7, page 89 (Zendrolion's Guide to Norwold) and Threshold issue #8, page 146, which can be found at the [Vault of Pandius](#).

Who's Who in the Wyrmssteeth part 3



This map is an updated version of the one published in Threshold 8

villages. He maintains also good relations with the dwarves of Stormhaven in the Ironfoot mountains and has a correspondence with some dwarves of the Rockhome government. He is a vassal of Eruptaar. Wyrksteeth dwarves are often vassals to Gold, Red or White dragons, but the different dwarven communities are normally friendly to each other even when they are vassals to competing dragons. The dragons take care not to push the dwarves against each other as they know that all the Wyrksteeth dwarves are related and would not in normal circumstances fight one another.

Fa'ea,

Wym, Gnome Thief 10.

Fa'ea is the leader of the Wym gnomes and lives in Wheine, where the gnomes are most numerous. She is a vassal of Jherdar and doesn't like much the power Ferrymix has in the region through her many dragon vassals, but she cannot do much about it, for now. The Wyrksteeth gnomes have good relations with other gnomes of Norwold, Oceansend, Rockhome and more distant lands. They are normally vassals to gold dragons and to some of the friendlier reds, such as Jherdar. The Dragonking Verslen has some gnome artisans, whom he appreciates very much, in his lair.

Arin Merrybrook,

Halfling Thief 8.

Originally a commercial envoy and explorer from Leeha, Arin bought a home in Wheine and has been living in the Wyrksteeth for many years. He has even become (secretly) a vassal to Pradapukran, and relates to the great red dragon all the information he finds about everyone. He is also the informal

leader of the small halfling community of the kingdom and still has some loyalty towards his former homeland. He would inform Leeha of any menace to the halfling lands. Arin has apparently good relations with everyone. Most of the halflings who live in the Wyrksteeth are vassal to Pradapukran, who has a great (and hidden) interest on the lands north of her domain.

DRAGONKIN AND DRAGONBORNS



Dragonborn

Terslaen,

Red Dragonborn Cleric 11.

A Scion of *Verslen* and famous adventurer, Terslaen leads a company called "The Sparks" composed of two other red dragonborn, two human followers of Pearl and a werebear. He is in direct competition with Keamptar and her group. He has lead The Sparks several times against Denagothians¹, Alphatian wizards and

¹ See "Who's Who in the Wyrksteeth" in issues 8 and 9 of Threshold for more about the "cold war" between the Wyrksteeth Kingdom and the black dragon Vitriol of Denagoth (and the Church of Idris).

werecreature hunters. He and his group have also hunted down spies of Vitriol and Dominagon¹ among the dragonborn, a fact which worries *Verslen* very much. Terslaen is an authority among many dragonborn, but in the past he has fought (although not to death) against scions of *Ferrymix*, *Xanesh*, *Medyanka* and their vassals.

**Keamptar,
Gold Dragonborn Sorceress 12.**

Scion of *Eruptaar*, Keamptar is also the leader of a band of adventurers, "The Gems", composed of another gold dragonborn, scion of *Tugar* and her betrothed, a gold dragonkin, a human, a halfling, a gnome and a werefox. They are in (almost) friendly competition with "The Sparks". Keamptar is respected by all the gold dragonborn. She has always avoided engaging in petty scuffles with other dragonborn, even if scions of *Ferrymix* and *Medyanka* have tried to provoke her into duels in the past. The Gems have fought often against Denagothians and Heldannic Knights.



Keamptar's Coat of Arms

¹ Dominagon's treachery is explained in Threshold issue #7, in the adventure In the Name of the Dragon, page 196 and in Threshold issue #8, page 156.

**Shivaar,
White Dragonkin Wizard 30.**

She is the informal leader of the dragonkin, being a powerful and old wizardess. She has almost absolute authority over the whites, although dragonkin of other lineages (colors) are inclined to hear her advice, but not so quick to obey her. She is a vassal of *Klaki*. Almost all the Greater Dragons and many Lesser Dragons have a community of dragonkin in their lairs. Shivaar is also secretly a member of the Fourth Legion, with the task to find traitors among the dragonkin.

**Sephyl,
Blue Dragonkin Bard 25.**

Sephyl is the leader of the Order of the Draconic Voice², the oldest of the Wyrmsinger orders. Its members are all trained by a blue dragon known as *Marasaphyl*, and are his vassals. The dragon is in turn a vassal of *Xanesh*. The college is located in a small valley in the southern Wyrms Head Mountains. It is the centre of a small community. Members of the order are normally, but not always, bards. They actively search the land for future members, and bring them to the college for training at a very young age.

**Alaa Claenra,
Dragonkin Thief 33.**

Alaa is the shaman of this mysterious and unique clan of dragonkin with shapeshifting abilities.³ The clan is an important part of the

² Created in "[New prestige class - Wyrmsinger](#)" by Chimpman (John Calvin)

³ The Claenra were detailed in "[Notes to Dragon Society in Wyrmssteeth](#)" in the original Wyrmssteeth Gazetteer. A darker twist could be given to the Wyrmssteeth Kingdom if a DM uses the human cattle idea described in the linked article.

Fourth Legion spying service. Alaa suspects there is something wrong with her human Overlord, Fang (see below) but she doesn't know yet what it is. For now, she just thinks he could have betrayed the Kingdom to Vitriol and is looking for evidence. She is a vassal of *Hk'rbal*.

Lizardkin, Troglodytes, Saurials, Frogfolk

Gsharr, Arctic Lizardman Warrior 23, Fourth Legion Overlord.

Gsharr¹ is Hk'rhal's second in command in Th'hral, and the effective ruler of the city in day to day affairs. He is a Wyrmsinger and a vassal of *Hk'rbal* and some say a Scion too, as the Black Lord would have sired him in his favorite lizardman form. Gsharr's mother has not confirmed nor denied this rumor and, strangely enough for a lizardman, he has no brothers or sisters. He hates Vitriol and his followers, and is always looking for potential spies in his city.

Tumkars, Troglodyte Shaman 20.

Tumkars is the informal leader of the troglodytes in the Wyrmssteeth. Most of them live in caves and villages all around the mountains. He is a priest of Ka and a vassal of *Nitbramor*. *Ferrymix* and her clan control many troglodyte communities in the Wyrmssteeth, a fact that *Hk'rbal* resents much. The two great dragons are in constant competition for more control of the local troglodytes.

¹ Originally created in "Notes to Dragon Society in Wyrmssteeth" by Giulio Caroletti. I've expanded the description.

Ataroiw, Saurial Wizard 22.

Ataroiw is the most important saurial in the Wyrmssteeth, a learned scholar and a vassal of *Marthaen*. Most of his people live north west of Windreach and are vassals to gold dragons. They are an ancient race and are rumored to have connections with other communities of their kind in Davania and the Hollow World².

Khu'vaan, Varkha Lizardwoman Shaman 25.

Khu'vaan is the Queen of the varkha³, the shadowdeep breed of lizardmen. She is a vassal of *Hk'rbal* and lives under Th'hral with a relevant number of her people. All of them are vassals of *Hk'rbal* or other blacks, but the great dragon is now worried that Vitriol and his followers may have succeeded in infiltrating his people.

Roglop, Frogfolk Shaman 21.

Roglop is the most important shaman of the ice frogfolk and a vassal of *Hekbekb*. Many frogfolk live in the humid valley between the Bloody Scythe and the Wyrms' Head Mountains, the so called Northern Valley or Four Titan's Valley. They are normally vassals of the blacks but *Medyanka* and other greens have some frogfolk vassals too, much to the annoyance of *Hk'rbal*, who desire domain over the reptilian (and amphibian) people of the Kingdom.

² See Threshold issue #5 and issue #9 for more about the saurials.

³ Introduced in "[The Dragon Kingdom of Wyrmssteeth](#)" by Giulio Caroletti in the original Wyrmssteeth Gazetteer.

Eldar, Elves, Fairies.

Alendhae, Eldar Sorcerer 36.

Alendhae¹ is a very powerful sorcerer and the recognized leader of the Eldar who live in the Wyrksteeth. Rumors say Eldars survive only in the Kingdom now, and that they are the ancestors of both dragons and elves. Common citizens of the Wyrksteeth believe Alendhae is immortal. He is a close friend of *Marthaen*. The Eldar are apparently vassals to no dragons, but some say they are secretly vassals to the ancient *Saerna*.

Sheidinaer, Elf Warrior/Wizard 10

Sheidinaer is the head of the Wymar clan, elves who chose to settle the Wyrksteeth centuries ago. She is a vassal of *Kaureken*, a female green dragon who is in turn a vassal of *Medyanka*, and lives in the eastern Valley of the Titans, in the forest of Seel. Most elves of the Wyrksteeth are vassal of green or gold dragons, yet the different communities normally have good relations with each other.

Neavarin, Elf Monk 12.

Neavarin is the leader of the Wyrmsinger Order of the Scaled Spirits², formed by the

¹ He and the Eldars appear in the Dragonlord trilogy by Thorarinn Gunnarsson. Eldars may be a mystara version of D&D 4th edition Eladrins. Multiple fan theories exists in the Vaults of Pandius, in [Simone Neri's "History of Dragonkind"](#) and also in ["Aliens In Mystaraspaces"](#), ["Timeline of the Immortals"](#), and ["A Natural History of Mystara: Many Hidden Secrets Revealed"](#).

² Created by Chimpman (John Calvin) in ["New prestige class - Wyrmsinger"](#)



Sheidinaer depicted with Kaureken

gold dragon *Aurilinilith*, a vassal of *Eruptaar*. She founded the order with a specific purpose in mind; to maintain the stability of the Wyrksteethian nations. The order is based out of a small monastery located at the tip of one of the tallest peaks in the Wyrksteeth Range. Members of this order are mostly monks, all of whom are trained at the monastery from very young. After the initial training is completed, members walk the land serving the dragons, and searching for new members.

Ke'drukin, Drake Warrior/Wizard 10.

Drakes are the most common fairies in the Wyrksteeth, and Ke'drukin is their informal

leader. Most of his people live in the forest of Seel alongside the local elves. The nearby Hidden Valley, north east of Wyrksteeth borders, is also inhabited by elves, fairies and druids. He is a vassal of the female green dragon *Lasikia*, in turn vassal to *Medyanka*. Many drakes are also vassals of gold dragons.

Giants, Brutemen, Humanoids and Others

Mokro, Stone Giant shaman 15.

Mokro is the old and respected leader of the stone giants who live in the Ironfoot mountains. Hill, Mountain and Storm giants who inhabit nearby regions respect his wisdom too, if not his authority. He is a vassal of *Syrek*, a male red dragon who is in turn a vassal of *Jherdar*. Hill, Mountain, Stone and Storm giants are more common in the Ironfoot mountains, and most of them are vassals to *Jherdar*, *Pradapukran*, *Eruptaar* or *Litbiar*.

Keali, Giant shaman 20.

Keali is the undisputed mistress of all the frost giants who inhabit the great glacier and its vicinity. She is a vassal of *Klaki*. Many frost giants live in the Wyrms' Head Mountains, particularly in the glaciers, and normally serve *Klaki* or his vassals. At least two communities of cloud giants live high above the Wyrksteeth, one vassal to *Marthaen*, one to *Xanesh*.

Sha-duk, Bruteman Shaman 32.

Sha-duk is the leader of the brutemen, or Ka-Na, as they call themselves, living in the

Wyrksteeth. He is a vassal of *Eruptaar* and most of his people live in the caves south east of Windreach or in the capital itself. Some other brutemen are also vassals of *Marthaen* and *Tugar*. A popular rumor in the Kingdom says that the Wyrksteeth brutemen possess ancient and secret magic.

Bogrom, Bugbear Warrior 30.

Bogrom is a powerful black bugbear, leader of many humanoids who live in the Wyrksteeth. He is a vassal of *Verslen* and controls, directly or indirectly, most of the goblinoid population of the Wyrms' Head Mountains. Several small tribes of humanoids roam the Kingdom, vassals to many different dragons. The Fourth Legion and the Legion of the Moon try to keep an eye on them, as some tribes have been infiltrated by the Church of Idris recently.

Werereatures, Lupins and Rakastas

Philippe de Suveire fils, Cleric of Pearl 15, Werewolf 15.

Philippe is the grandson of Sire Philippe de Suveire¹, who became a cleric of Pearl in 859 AC, began recruiting other werewolves in 871 AC and founded the Legion of the Moon in 876 AC. Philippe is very old and acts as a sort of grandfather for all the members of the legion. He also has a daughter in the Second Legion, Camille, while his son Gerard is a wizard and a Wyrmsinger in the service of the Dragonking, and three grandchildren who are

¹ Originally created by Giulio Caroletti in "[Wyrksteeth Gazetteer continued](#)"; I've added the rest of the family.

entering the army too. Philippe is a personal friend of Malachie de Morlay. Philippe is a Wyrmsinger and a vassal of the Dragonking Verslen, like all his family.

**Julius Penhaligon,
Cleric of Pearl 34, Werewolf 12,
Moon General.**

Born in 959 AC in Thyatis, last son of Cornelius Penhaligon, younger brother of Arturus Penhaligon¹, he became cleric of the Order in 977 AC, and wandered the Old World for several years. Julius was captured in Glantri and suffered experiments at the hands of prince Volospin Aendyr, and was turned into a werewolf. After escaping Glantri, he returned to Wyrksteeth, where he became a Red Defender. He was never defeated and became first a Regent in 988 AC, then the Moon General in 993 AC. Julius is a Wyrmsinger and a vassal of *Verslen*, the current Dragonking, but has cordial relations with *Eruptaar* and *Marthaen* too.



*Portrait of Julius
Penhaligon*

¹ Originally created by Giulio Caroletti in "[Wyrksteeth Gazetteer continued](#)". For more informations on the Penhaligon family, also check [Threshold issue #5](#), page 200, in the Thyatian Senators article by Giulio Caroletti.



*Lupin or werecreature depicted
in a Wyrksteeth book*

**Jacob "Raven" Aloysius,
Fighter 20, Wereraven 10,
First Legion Overlord.**

Jacob² comes from Ierendi, where he was born in 968 AC. His family was killed by adventurers hunting werecreatures, and he was forced to flee in 984 AC. After a long wandering and many adventures, he reached Norwold and the Wyrksteeth in 991 AC. He became a vassal of *Xanesb* and a Wyrmsinger, and he must have performed some great service for him, as the Blue Dragon Lord insisted that he was nominated First Legion Overlord in 996 AC.

**Harald Haraldsson,
Fighter 29, Werewolf 10,
Second Legion Overlord.**

Harald³ is the son of the former Moon General Harald Hardrade, who in 981 AC signed the treaty of alliance with Malachie du Marais. He is a Wyrmdanner and was born in

² Originally created by Giulio Caroletti in "[Wyrksteeth Gazetteer continued](#)", but I've expanded his background.

³ *ibid*

963 AC. He is a vassal of *Jberdar* and a Wyrmsinger. His father was killed in Glantri, around 990 AC, by werewolf hunters, and he is a close friend of Malachie.

Julian Hastings,
Fighter 22, Werewolf 10,
Third Legion Overlord.

Wurmsteethian descendant of Glantrian refugees, Julian¹ was born in 967 AC. He is werewolf, a Wyrmsinger and a vassal of *Medyanka*. He was recently nominated ruler of the city of Seel. He is doing his best to establish more cordial relationship between werecreatures, elves, fairies and druids, as all are quite numerous in the forest around the city.

Arvea,
Priest 20, Werefox 10.

Arvea comes from the west, but she has not spoken much of her homeland. She is a vassal of *Eruptaar* and a priestess of Zirchev, well respected in the werecreature community of the Wurmsteeth. The church of Pearl and *Verlsen* forged the strongest connections with werecreatures in the last centuries, so *Eruptaar* has recently established an alliance with the church of Zirchev to counter the Dragonking's power.

Tzun Kwaff,
Lupin Warrior 18.

Tzun, of the Heldann Shepherd breed, is a famous adventurer and a recognized authority among Wurmsteeth lupins. Some of his people had clashes with werecreatures in the past, but Tzun is now trying to encourage tolerance among lupins. He is a vassal of *Kosolk*, a gold who is in turn a vassal of *Eruptaar*. Most if not all the lupin

¹ *ibid*

communities of the Kingdom are vassals of gold dragons.

Hekara,
Rakasta Sorcerer 20.

Hekara, a mountain rakasta, is the leader of the Order of Tooth and Claw², the newest Wyrmsinger order, formed by the red dragon *Vermylaxis*. The order is structured like a guild, and although it has no central base of operations, it does maintain a local headquarters in each of the major cities in the Wurmsteeth Range. Members of this order are mainly rogues, although other classes are also trained. For the most part, these Wyrmsingers are fairly mercenary, and will never perform a service without some type of compensation being offered. Members must also pay out yearly dues, and tithe a percentage of their earnings directly to the guild. The order is in reality a spy network which *Vermylaxis* controls from his lair in the north of the Kingdom. Rumors that *Vermylaxis* is a vassal to *Pradapukran* may or may not be true. Sure enough, *Pradapukran* and *Ferrimyx*'s family have been competing for control of the rakasta communities of the Wurmsteeth for centuries.

HUMANS

Steinhard Hoen,
Wizard 23,
First Legion Overlord.

Steinhard³ Hoen is a Wyrmdanner, an

² Created by Chimpman (John Calvin) in ["New prestige class - Wyrmsinger"](#)

³ Originally created by Giulio Caroletti in ["Wurmsteeth Gazetteer continued"](#); I've expanded a bit his background.

Antalian native of the Wyrksteeth¹. He was born in a mountain village in 971 AC and is a vassal to *Klaki*. He is an amazing expert of ice magic, and the White Dragon Lord favors him much for this reason.

**Geoffrey MacDonald,
Fighter 36,
Second Legion Overlord.**

A Glantrian from Klantyre and a member of the Followers of Claymore, Geoffrey² was born in 949 AC and came to the Wyrksteeth in 979 AC. Since then, he distinguished himself enough to become a Wyrmsinger, vassal of *Eruptaar* and ruler of Tua'than.

**Sylvie du Chateau Tarent,
Thief 18.,
Third Legion Overlord.**

Sylvie³ is of Averognian origin, but was born in the Wyrksteeth in 976 AC. She is the ruler of Wheine, a Wyrmsinger and a vassal of *Sberain*, a female green dragon who is in turn vassal to *Medyanka*.



Portrait of Sylvie

**Fang (P'hegshyan),
Shapeshifter 25,
Fourth Legion Overlord.**

Apparently a mysterious human, "Fang" is in fact an Outer Being cultist⁴ who long ago lost his human attributes. His powerful magics have prevented his treachery from being discovered. He is a vassal of *Verslen* and the head of Wyrksteeth spies in foreign nations, and he has done an impeccable job so far. It's hard to say what his true plans are.

**Fredek Halvardson,
Rightful Heir to the Heldann Freeholds.
Fredek⁵ is the last heir of the Haldis dynasty**

¹ The term "Wyrmdanner" was created by Giulio Caroletti in the original Wyrksteeth Gazetteer to indicate Heldann refugees, escaped from the south after the invasion of their homeland by the Knights of Vanya. In Threshold issue 7, page 190, I however used the word to indicate the antalian natives of the Wyrksteeth kingdom, using instead simply the term "Heldanner" for any refugee from the south, as Simone Neri did in his Traveller's Guide to Norwold in the same issue.

² Originally created by Giulio Caroletti in "[Wyrksteeth Gazetteer continued](#)"; I've expanded a bit his background.

³ *ibid*

⁴ Originally created by Giulio Caroletti in "[Wyrksteeth Gazetteer continued](#)"; 've expanded a bit his background. For information about the Outer Beings, see Geoff Gander's article "[Insanity, Horror, and the Outer Beings in Mystara](#)".

⁵ Fredek was originally created by Bruce Heard in "[Heldannic Knights -- Historical Timeline](#)" and "[Heldannic Knights NPCs -- Part 2](#)". He could participate in the assault on Freiburg of 1015 AC, also imagined by Bruce Heard in "[The Future of the Heldannic Knights](#)". Or he could have another chance to defeat the Knights in 1019



Haldis partisans carrying Fredek to the Wyrksteeth

which ruled the Heldann Freeholds before the arrival of the Hattian knights of Vanya. His grandfather, the last Haldis king, was killed in the fall of Freiburg in 950 AC. His father was captured and killed after a failed attempt to retake Freiburg in 993 AC. Fredek was born in 991 AC and, after his mother's death in 994 AC, he was brought to the Wyrksteeth by Haldis partisans. He is just 9 years old now (in 1000 AC), under the direct protection of the Great Gold Dragon *Eruptaar*. His loyal huskarl (knight) Bjorn Siegsson is the unofficial ambassador of the occupied Heldannic Kingdom in the Wyrksteeth.

**Knyaz (duke) Korun,
of the Suva Voysko (Owl host):**

Korun¹ leads the Blue host, or the Owl host, of the nomads Vrodniki² of the Ransarn

AC, when the Fan almanacs imagined the Heldannic Order engulfed in civil war. See also the timeline in [Threshold issue #7](#), page 188-189.

¹ He appeared already in Threshold issue #7, in the adventure "In the Name of the Dragon", page 196.

² The Vrodniki are described in Threshold

Valley. He is secretly a vassal of the blue dragon *Dominagon*, who abandoned the kingdom and is now in league with Vitriol and the Onyx Ring of Denagoth.

**Knyaz Visok,
of the Orao Voysko (Eagle host):**

Visok leads the Red host, or Eagle host, of the nomads Vrodniki of the Ransarn Valley. He is a vassal of *Emberash* and a bitter rival of Korun, who he suspects (rightfully so) must be up to something. He hopes to be able to prove that Korun is a traitor, so he will be able to defeat the Owl host and gather all the Vrodniki of Ransarn Valley under his rule.

**Knyaz Kadin,
of the Vuka Voysko (Wolf host):**

Kadin leads the White host, or Wolf host, of the nomads Vrodniki of the Ransarn Valley. His group roams the Northern Valley, or Four Titan's Valley, mostly along the Visidrik river. He is a vassal of *Aillucent*, who has strengthened the host with many werecreatures.

**Adhmad,
Human Druid 33.**

Adhmad, a powerful druid, is a Dahran³, a human culture who lives mostly in the area

issue #7, in Simone Neri's "A Traveller's Guide to Norwold", in Giampaolo Agosta's "The Skaufskogr and beyond" and in my adventure "In the Name of the Dragon", as noted above.

³ The Dahran are my creation, I imagine them as descendant of the Dunharians "celtic-like" people who roamed the area around 2000 BC, according to Simone Neri's A Traveller's Guide to Norwold in Threshold issue #7.

of Seel and the Hidden Valley and claims to be the first human group which inhabited the area, before the Antalians and the Vrodniki. He is a vassal of *Pradapukran*, who has always protected the Dahran.

Ambassadors

Titus Keandros, Warrior 8.

Titus is the new ambassador from Thyatis after his predecessor Lucius Balbus¹ left recently. While Lucius did not like the Kingdom much, Titus is very much intrigued by this unique place and is succeeding in establishing better human relations with the many inhabitants of Thyatian descent in Seel, including werecreatures.

Saadena Jonsdottir, Wizard 16.

Saadena is half Alphantian and half Norwolder, and she is the appointed ambassador from the Kingdom of Alpha. While Alphantians were mistrusted until recently in the Kingdom, after the wars of some centuries ago², *Verslen* is now realizing that Ericall's Kingdom may be different. Relations will further improve after 1011 AC, in the face of a common enemy, the Heldannic Knights.

Marcus Thorsson, Warrior 15.

Marcus, half Thyatian and half Norwolder, is the ambassador from Oceansend. The coastal city state takes great care to maintain good relations with the Dragon Kingdom,

¹ See ["The Dragon Kingdom of Wyrksteeth"](#) by Giulio Caroletti.

² A war between dragons and alphantians is described in the Dragonlord trilogy.

obviously fearing its powerful neighbours. In 1011 AC and the following years, Marcus will succeed in securing the aid of the dragons in the fight for Oceansend against the Heldannic Knights.

Marie Selavount, Wizard 15 and Werefox 10.

Marie is the ambassador sent to the Wyrksteeth by Malachie du Marais. After 1010 AC, she will also become an official Glantrian ambassador. Marie has good relations



with the most important dragons, including *Verslen* and *Eruptaar*.

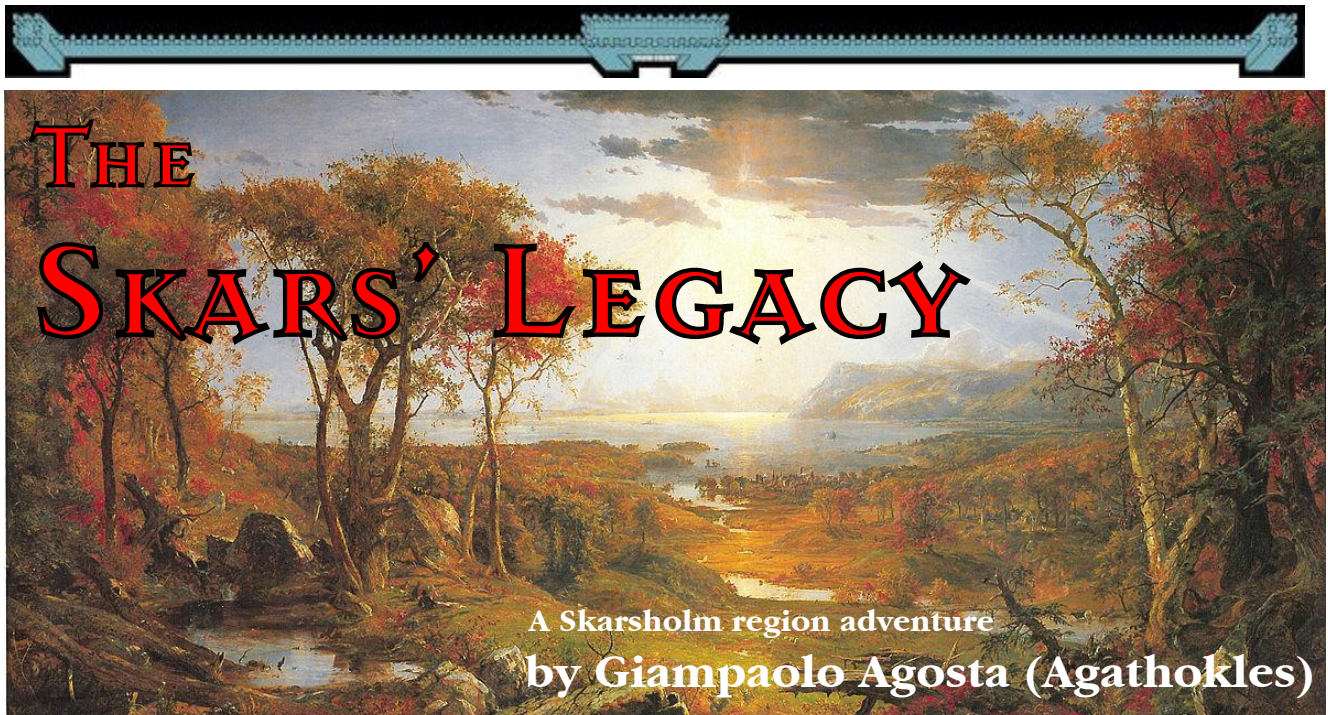
Jelenal Thearin, Elf warrior 10.

Jelenal is the ambassador from Wendar. His main task in the Wyrksteeth is to promote cooperation against the Shadow Lord of Denagoth and the Church of Idris. *Verslen* is quite cautious on the topic, but he may listen more attentively once *Vitriol* and his followers become more active and menacing.

Supporters and spies of the Wyrksteeth outside the Kingdom

Vassals of the Wyrksteeth dragons do not live inside the Dragon Kingdom only. As

Continued on [page 181](#)



The Frodhulf Estuary

INTRODUCTION

The Skars' Legacy is a short campaign for low-level PCs, set in the Frodhulf Vale area, north-east of the Skaufskogr. The adventure begins as a murder investigation, but quickly turns into a rush to draw together an alliance of the diverse people living in the Skaufskogr and nearby lands to thwart Harak Red-Hand, an Orc warlord bent on invading the region and retrieve the amulet once held by the ogress wokan, The Skars.

This adventure is presented using *AD&D 2e* statistics, and *Birtbright War Card* rules for mass combat.

SYNOPSIS

The adventure assumes the PCs are newcomers to the Skaufskogr. In Act I, they reach Frodhulf Outpost, a small village inhabited by local Heldanner folk, at the time of the May Day festival. A local leader is murdered, and the PCs are asked to take part in the manhunt for the assassin. They follow the murderer, a Bugbear, up to the Old Fort, capture him and bring him before the village assembly. Regardless of the trial outcome, the PCs may gain allies and enemies.

At the end of the trial, it becomes apparent that the Orc warlord, Harak Red-Hand, is behind the assassination, and his armies are marching north-east from the Skarsholm. The PCs, if they want to save their new home, need to form a coalition between the local tribes, as well as gather the support of the Alphonian garrison at Midway Haven.

In Act II, the adventure becomes more of a sandbox, with the PCs free to pursue several

avenues to gather new allies, within a short timeframe.

In Act III, Harak's invasion finally reaches Frodhulf Outpost, or the alliance chooses to bring the battle to the orcish forces while they are still blocked west of the bog. In any case, the resolution is left to a field battle between the PC-led allied forces and the orc army.

Adventure Hooks

The PCs, as mentioned above, have just arrived in the Skaufskogr region. They may be Alpathian colonists, Thyatian spies, or settlers from the Known World who have reached Norwold following King Ericall's call – given their low level, they are not pretenders to noble titles, but mere colonists, possibly followers of one of the NPC pretenders.

If they are colonists, their goal is to establish, either on their own or in the name of the Alpathian government or one of its proxies, a power base in the region, which might be as lowly as a homestead, or as large as a barony, in case they are working for one of the pretenders. In the latter case, it is assumed that this high-level NPC is currently absent, most likely attending Ericall's court in Alpha.

If the PCs are Thyatian or Heldannic spies, they might be tempted to let the orcs overrun the region. However, things will play better for their employers if the alliance of local tribes succeeds, but negotiations to include the Alpathian garrison fail.

ACT I: MURDER AT THE BJARTTANDRI

Whatever their reason to travel to the Skaufskogr is, the PCs arrive at Frodhulf Outpost from the port of Midway Haven, since the southern routes are blocked by an orcish invasion in the Skarsholm. The PCs arrive just before the Bjarttandri (May Day) festival. They have the opportunity to visit the outpost and meet other PCs or NPCs. When they are settled at the inn, the festival gets under way, and the PCs can take part in or observe the druidic ceremony:

The evening falls on the village, and both locals and visitors prepare for the climax of the festival, a ceremony presided by the druidic priests of Frey and Freyja. A large bonfire has been prepared in the center of the fair grounds, ready to be lighted by the chief druid.

When the sun finally disappears beyond the Final Range, the druids, led by senior druid Olvir, arrive from their homes near the border of the Skaufskogr. Each of them holds a burning torch, as well as sacred items you do not always recognize (you're too far, and it's getting dark – there seem to be at least knives and branches of some kind of tree or plant). Olvir, a middle-aged, stout man who looks more a warrior than a priest or sage, addresses the crowd with a short exhortation, mostly about the state of agriculture and cattle raising in the area, then lights the bonfire with his torch, signalling the end of the formal celebration and the beginning of the "real" one – which is a chaotic mix of drinking, eating and dancing.

After the religious ceremony, the festival goes on the whole night, with a lot of dancing and drinking. At sunrise, a cry for help reaches the resting PCs, if they are within earshot of the meadows to the east of the fair grounds. Otherwise, they are warned by a friendly NPCs (e.g., the innkeeper) who has heard the call and asks them to go with him.

When you push beyond the last rows of tents, you see a human boy rushing towards you. Meanwhile, people are starting to get out of the tents, so it is a small crowd that finally manages to understand what has scared the boy: there is, at some distance from the tents, a man lying face down in the low grass. As you reach him, you see that the man's head has been shattered by a powerful blow, and lies now in a pool of blood.

If the PCs look for traces, they discover large footprints leading south, around the village and into the river. If they try to talk to the boy, he calms down quickly enough. From what he says, the PCs can gather that he just discovered the body while he was moving a small herd of sheep to their buyer's tent.

After the PCs have had some time to react to the events, someone recognizes the dead man:

Meanwhile, some of the local humans have turned the corpse on its back to examine it. One of them says: «By Frey, it's Steinar! Steinar Eidhurson!» Apparently, the name is well known to most people, some of whom run back towards the inn, maybe to warn the relatives of the dead man.

Several of the important villagers and visitors will gather. Hjalmar¹ will organize volunteers to search and capture the assassin. Since the assassin has crossed the river, squads will be organized to search different locations across the river. Hjalmar will mark the starting location of each squad on a map of the village and its immediate surroundings. Given the path of the assassin's footprints, the squads composed by the locals will be assigned to the southernmost areas, even if the PCs volunteer to participate in the manhunt. If they do not volunteer, Hjalmar will ask them to participate, just to stay on the safe side and check all possible escape routes.

Naturally, the assassin actually fled south only to mislead the pursuers. He entered the river, and went back north for a while before returning on land and escaping towards the Old Fort. The PCs will likely find his tracks (the DM should ask for a Wisdom check if none of the PCs has a *Tracking* or *Hunting* non-weapon proficiency). However, at this point most of the squads will have left in other directions, so the PCs will have to pursue the assassin on their own.

The Old Fort

The Old Fort, contrary to most stories, is not haunted. However, a small band of bugbears has taken residence here. They hope to exact a toll from travellers, but few people go near the fort. Moreover, the hill upon which the fort was built was originally a cloud giant's burial mound. It is possible to enter the mound via the well. The impluvium also

¹ See *The Thing* on page 120



leads to the inner chamber, where the granite coffin has been adapted as a cistern, but it is too small even for most halflings.

The bugbear tribe has temporarily left the Old Fort, establishing a small camp outside Frodhulf Outpost. Loskar, one of the bugbears, has been hired by Harak's agents to spread chaos among the Heldanners of the Frodhulf Vale. He travelled with his tribe to the Bjarttandri fair, and there he murdered Steinar Eidhurson, a prominent farmer. Then he fled for the Old Fort, hoping to shake any pursuer by feinting a flight to the south first.

Loskar the Betrayer

Male Bugbear Barbarian Fighter 3, CN
Str 18/51, Int 8, Wis 7,
Dex 12, Con 13, Cha 8
AC 6 (brigantine); HP 20.
THAC0 16; Dmg 1d8+3 (morningstar).
XP Value: 120.

When the PCs arrive at the Old Fort, following the tracks of the bugbear assassin Loskar, a small party of Mengul Orcs has set an ambush here, taking some time to reach

the Old Fort crossing the creek north of the bogs. Their original goal was to kill Loskar to cover the tracks linking the assassination attempt to Harak, but now they prefer to first kill the PCs, and then deal with Loskar.

Orc Ambushers

10 Mengul Orcs, 1 HD (HP: 3-6),
AC 6 (leather armor and small shield),
THAC0 20,
Dmg 1d6 (spear, short sword or club).
XP Value: 150.

If the PCs are about to be defeated by Loskar and the orcs, *Howls-in-the-Night's* skeletal minions appear to save the day, and drag the (likely unconscious) PCs to the Lupin necromancer's hideout in a nearby barrow.

The Thing

If the PCs were able to defeat Loskar and the Mengul Orcs, they can drag the traitorous bugbear in front of the Thing, if he is still alive. If they do so, the bugbear clan leader offers to pay a blood price to Steinar's widow, and to ban Loskar. However, many of the human conservatives, headed by Solvi the Grim and Thorgrim Thorvaldurson ask that the entire bugbear tribe be chased from the region. The moderate clans are uncertain, having lost their strongest leader. If the PCs are able to rally Freysteinn and Hjalmar, as well as to get the Lupin clans cooperate with them, they can outvote Solvi and Thorgrim. In this case, they gain the friendship of the bugbears, who will aid them in the war.



If the outcome of the trial is favorable to the PCs, they also gain a story award of 300 XPs.

Frodhulf Vale's Thing (assembly) gathers at the Fair's Grounds in Frodhulf Outpost. It is composed of the armed men and women of each homestead, plus the woodsmen led by Hjalmar Ragnarson. Hjalmar, Steinar, Thorgrim, Freysteinn and Solvi are the leaders, the other farmers usually support one of them (two each, except Hjalmar, who is considered less important by the farmers).

Solvi:

This former bandit would like nothing more than controlling the Thing for his own profit. However, his lack of personal fighting skills – compared to Steinar and Hjalmar, at least –

has kept him from gathering a stronger support. He has a personal guard of 10 mercenaries (a mixed lot of bandits, Freeholder exiles, Helskirian expatriates and two Ostlander Berserkers) as well as the larger farm (and therefore the larger following) of all the homesteaders.

Steinar:

This powerful warrior is a Freeholder exile. His strength lies in his fighting prowess, but he is hindered by his lack of connection with the local families, and the fact that he only represents his wife's interests, not his own homestead. Steinar dies at the beginning of the adventure, creating a power vacuum in the Thing.

Thorgrim:

This elder godi has been the head of his clan for almost 30 years, having replaced his father, an impetuous warrior who died in a skirmish against marauding goblinoids. He is a conservative leader.

Freysteinn:

This pious worshipper of Frey only recently became the head of his clan, replacing his father Haraldur Freysteinsson, who died during winter. A strong supporter of the druidic circle, Freysteinn has managed to retain the support of two minor homesteads, but a third homesteader, Eirikur Grimurson (m/h/F4, N), switched allegiance to Solvi.

Hjalmar:

This ranger is supported by local woodsmen and hunters as well as by the few craftsmen of Frodhulf Outpost. He keeps neutral in the disputes for land rights, but presses for the creation of a more organized militia.

ACT II: THE ORCISH INVASION

The Skarsholm, a region of rolling plains rising to the foothills of the Mengul Mountains was once the home of an ogress woka, known as *Skars*. An orc warlock, *Harak Red-Hand* (m,Orc,F9/W9,LE) is looking for her necklace, a talisman that allows the user to control wolves, and has led an army of orcs and ogres to Skarsholm. However, the woka had, before her death, used her shapechanging powers to hide the necklace – her most powerful talisman – in the dwarven mines of Syrrak. Therefore Harak has not been able to locate the wolf's teeth necklace.

He is trying to widen the search to the neighbouring lands, but in this effort he has awakened the Bog Monster, an old undead threat. When Harak sent his forces in the Bog, the elf mummy reacted to the presence of orcs, the ancestral enemies of its species, in its resting place. He is now looking for a way to remove the mummy – he does not feel strong enough to confront it alone.

Harak leads an army of more than one thousand orcs. He can also count on the support of a small tribe of ogres, as well as his personal guard, the Bull's Head horde.

Gathering Allies

As the PCs realize that the threat of Harak Red-Hand's army is growing, they will start gathering forces for the inevitable showdown. To face Harak, they need more troops than the Heldanners can gather alone

Harak Red-Hand

Male Orc (Orcus Imperator Rex)

Fighter 9/Wizard 9, Lawful Evil

Str 16, Int 15, Wis 12,

Dex 9, Con 13, Cha 10

Senses: Infravision 60', Detect new constructions 35%, Detect slopes 25%, -1 penalty in sunlight.

THAC0: 12; Dmg: by weapon +1; HP: 35

Wpn Profs: Longsword, Battle Axe, Light Crossbow, Dagger, Club, Single Weapon Fighting Style, Punching specialization.

NWPs: Endurance, 13; Reading/Writing

Essurian Runes, 16; Weaponsmithing, 12;

Languages: Mengul Orcish (native),

Heldanner 15, Denagothian 15; Ancient

History (Mengul Goblinoids) 14;

Mountaineering; Hunting 11.

XP Value: 3000.

The Mengul Horde (7 units)

Unit 1, Bull's Head Horde: 40 Ogres with clubs; 30 elite Orc fighters with chain mail, shield, spear and battleaxe; 30 Orc Defenders of Kaarash with chainmail and bastard sword; 100 Orcs medium infantry (1/4/3/3/-1).

Units 2-5, Orc Infantry: 200 Mengul Orcs with studded leather armor, shields, spears, short swords and clubs (1/3/2/2/-1).

Units 6-7, Orc Archers: 200 Mengul Orcs with studded leather armor, short bows or crossbows, and short swords or clubs (1/1/2/2/-3).

– they will need to get more men from the other local tribes and clans.

Several of the main encounters of this adventure allow the PCs to acquire loyal troops or at least to be able to pull in favors, giving them help for the Skarsholm campaign.

Table 1 shows a quick summary of the primary method to acquire the services of each force.

Table 1: Allied forces: trigger events

Unit	Type and size	Acquisition method
Main units		
Heldanner Clans	400 human irregulars	Negotiating with the clan heads and delivering a speech at the Thing
Vatski Boyars	200 human cavalry	Mercenaries
Vrodnik Infantry	200 human heavy infantry	Mercenaries
Lupin Tribes	200 lupin scouts	Negotiate with the tribal council
Elf Clans	200 elf archers	Lay the Bog Monster to rest
The Night Hunt	200 skeletons	Befriending Howls-in-the-Night
Small units		
Alphatian Garrison	40 human infantry	Negotiating with the Alphatian governor
Rakasta tribes	40 rakasta scouts	Chasing the Mountain Giant from the Rakasta Tribelands
Syrrak Dwarves	20 dwarf guards	Saving the Syrrak Dwarves from the Undead Fomorian
Bugbear Tribe	30 bugbears	Holding the Bugbear chief's side after the ambush at the Old Fort
Cloud Giants	5 cloud giants	Obtaining the War Banner of the Giant King

Acquiring Mercenaries

Acquiring mercenaries is mostly a matter of money and time. Regarding cost, Vatski cavalry costs 4000 gold pieces to hire for the campaign, while Vrodniki infantry costs 2000 gold pieces. Raising this much gold in a short timeframe is the real challenge -- the units need to be mobilized at least 15 days before the battle.

This part of the adventure is very freeform -- there are many ways of collecting the necessary money. A few options are listed below:

- *Reward for other quests*: if another part of the adventure is solved especially well, the interested party may put forward an extra payment towards the cost of mercenaries. This works particularly well for the Dwarven Mine quest, but could be applied also to any other, including the "Murder at the Bjarttandri" initial quest (in that case, the money could be part of the weregild paid by the Bugbear tribe). In general, such rewards should be in the range of 200 to 600 gold pieces per adventure.
- *Exploring ruins*: this is an opportunity to add a straightforward treasure hunt to the adventure. You can use any suitable module, or even single encounters out of a given module, such as the various giant mounds from "*King of the Giantdowns*".
- *Negotiation*: the player characters can always try to squeeze more support from interested parties. The Alphantian governor, the Syrrak Dwarves, the Heldanner clans, and even the Elves are reasonable targets. Also, if the PCs are agents of a foreign

power, they may appeal to their superiors for increased funds.

- *Piracy or theft*: while leaving the Frodhulf vale region too long may be too risky, the PCs might learn of a specific shipment which could be stolen. The shipment may be part of enemy logistics (where the "enemy" depends on the initial motivations of the PCs). Alternately, this could be a good opportunity to run a short adventure in Landfall -- "The Big Score" from "*FGAZ8 Streets of Landfall*" would fit well.

The Lupin Tribes

To obtain the help of the Lupin tribes, the PCs need to negotiate with the *Ulfthingi*, the tribal council. The Lupin tribal council is not very different from the Thing of Frodhulf vale, except the Lupin chiefs are more aloof, and tend to distrust human and demihuman PCs. Armann Ofrhugi, Hinrik Raudhr, and Rurik Fedrjugr are the three most prominent chiefs¹. The PCs need to persuade at least two of the three chiefs -- once two have been swayed, the others will follow suit.

Armann is a powerful fighter (F6, Barbarian kit), and respects most hunting and combat prowess. An especially strong PC fighter might challenge and defeat him in single (non-lethal) combat, but this is a risky strategy, since PCs are not on the same level as these NPCs. A more reliable strategy is for the party to hunt a powerful beast (e.g., a grizzly bear) to prove their worth.

¹ See "The Skaufskogr and Beyond", *Threshold Magazine* Issue 7, for more details on these NPCs.

Hinrik is a shaman. He will be impressed by knowledgeable and wise PCs. Challenging him to a contest of wits, and winning, will persuade him. Otherwise, the PCs will need to submit to an initiation ritual. The ritual (and the mix of magical substances imbibed or smoked during it) will send the party in a coma -- their bodies remain asleep, but their spirits are stranded in Limbo. The specific area of Limbo is, luckily, well-travelled, since most Lupins on a similar quest pass through it. PCs will just need to follow their tracks, and possibly avoid or fight off a Minion of Chaos before finding a monolith covered with carved runes, which will send them back to their bodies.

Rurik is a warrior, but also a merchant. Negotiating a favorable deal for his tribe's cattle with the Alphas will win him to the PCs' cause, as will as straightforward bribe (300 gold pieces will suffice).

The Rakasta Tribes

The Rakasta tribes are at odds with the Mountain Giant, Hamarki, who lives near their territory. They want him chased off, but they are (unsurprisingly) not up to the task. They will try to trade their help in return for having the giant chased away.

This is obviously an impossible task for the low-level PCs. However, it is best if the PCs accept it -- otherwise, the Rakasta will not reveal the location of Hamarki's cave, which is necessary to find the Syrrak Dwarves' stronghold (see below).

When the PCs find Hamarki, they can either ignore the Rakasta's request -- thus losing

their help but gaining Hamarki's help in finding the Dwarves -- or they can ask Hamarki to feign leaving the area for a while -- the giant will enormously enjoy tricking the Rakasta, and will readily agree to the idea. Finally, they could come up with some clever trick to persuade the Giant to leave -- Hamarki is relatively naïf, and may fall for well designed plots (e.g., persuading him that Dominagon, the Blue Dragon, is moving into his territory to hunt him down).

The Bog Monster

The Bog Monster is a monstrous undead menace that has recently made itself known in the bogs north-west of Frodhulf Outpost. It has the form of a desiccated humanoid, tar black with sticky, dark red hair. The monster wields a broken longsword in his right hand, and has been known to attack also by gripping his opponents with its bare left hand.

The Bog Monster is actually a *bog mummy*, a rarely occurring type of ancient dead preserved by the oxygen-deprived environment of the bog. In life, it was a Shiye-Lawr elf, Prince Gaernil, son of King Drushiye. He commanded an Alphan invasion force at the Battle of Frodhulf Creek two centuries ago. His forces were pushed into the bog by the combined efforts of the southern Heldanner jarls and the Heldann shepherd lupin clans.

The Alphan commander, seeing his forces outmatched, had sent for the Skaufskogr elves' help, hoping to turn the tables against the Heldanner alliance. The Skaufskogr elves, however, only offered Prince Gaernil safe passage through their lands, provided that he

left Norwold with his army. Gaernil, in his rage, turned back their offer, and was relentlessly driven by the Heldanners into the bog with his army. The Alphatian Prince died fighting, his broken sword in hand, and cursing the elves that had wronged him.

Gaernil's body drowned into the bog, where the chemical composition of the soil preserved it, turning it into a leathery, desiccated husk, which remained dormant for two centuries. When Harak's orcs entered the bog searching for the ogress woka's treasure, they disturbed the uneasy rest of Prince Gaernil, who returned as the Bog Monster.

The Bog Monster is able to create other, less powerful, bog mummies. These "Bog Zombies" have been plaguing the Sirraen province for some weeks now, attacking the elves of the area. For this reason, the Skauskogr Foresthomes will not be able to provide assistance to the alliance, unless the Bog Monster is removed – either destroyed, or put to rest. On the other hand, the Bog Monster is also hampering Harak's progress, so removing it will speed up the invasion.

Harak Red-Hand will take one full month to overcome the Bog Monster, assuming the PCs do nothing to put the Shiye prince at rest.

Prince Gaernil of Shiye-Lawr, the Bog Monster¹

Accidental, restless, withered, humanoid III Rank Mummy, NE (formerly Male Elf Fighter 10/Wizard 8, TN)

Str 18/00; Int 14; Wis 10;
Dex 7; Con NA; Cha 3.

Special Abilities: cannot be harmed by weapons of less than +2 enchantment; Elemental immunity: Cold/Water; Elemental resistance: Earth; Rejuvenation: 6 HP/hour, needs to rest 1 day before and 1 day after rejuvenating, dies at -10 HP; Mummy rot fatal in 1d12 weeks; Fear 1d10 rounds, -3 saves; Infravision 90'; Cause Horror check on sight.

Salient Powers: Create Undead (1st rank bog mummies), Weightlessness (1st rank, but can move unhindered through swamps).

Vulnerabilities: can be damaged by Essurian weapons; Allergen (Fascination): Imperial Alphatian sigil or banner (1d8 rounds, saves at -2); Allergen (Repulsion) Skaldic war chant; Bonded to the bog; Elemental Vulnerability: Fire; Holy Water inflicts 1d6 HP damage.

AC 3; HD 9; HP 45

Movement: 18,

unhindered by water, mires, etc.

THAC0: 9; Dmg 2d8

or 1d4+6 broken longsword.

XP Value: 7000.

¹ The AD&D rules for custom mummies can be found in Van Richten's Guide to the Created, later collected in the Van Richten's Monster Hunter Compendium, volume I.

Bog Zombies

Invoked, withered, humanoid I Rank Mummy, Lawful Evil

HD 2 (9 HP); Movement 9; AC 7;

THAC0 19; Dmg 1d8 or by weapon +4.

Special Abilities: immune to non-magical weapons, except cold iron or Essurian weapons; Elemental Immunity: Cold; Rejuvenation (takes 9-11 days to heal, dies at 0 HP); Touch attacks inflicts debilitating poison (-2 Con); Fear (no penalty, 1d4 rounds, causes -1 to attack and damage rolls); Infravision 30'.

Salient Powers: Not slowed by bogs.

Special Vulnerabilities: Allergen (Fascination): Imperial Alphetian sigil or banner (1d8 rounds, saves at -2); Allergen (Repulsion) Skaldic war chant; Bonded to the bog and the nearby region; Elemental Vulnerability: Fire; Holy Water inflicts 1d10 HP damage.

XP Value: 270.

The Dwarven Mine

This part of the adventure takes place in the Mountain Rakasta Tribelands. It starts whenever the PCs decide to investigate the disappearance of the Syrrak dwarves. The dwarves had a contract with the Lupin tribe led by Hinrik Raudhr to deliver weapons at this year's Bjarttandri – a few days after the PCs arrive at Frodhulf Outpost.

There are a number of reasons why the PCs may wish to investigate this mystery – they might be asked by Hinrik, maybe in exchange for supporting the PCs' side at the trial of Loskar the Betrayer, or as part of their initiation in Hinrik's tribe. They might also investigate on their own, if they need weapons to supply their own army. Finally, the ghost of the Giant King might set the defeat of his Fomorian enemy as a condition to give the PCs his legendary War Banner.

The dwarves have been imprisoned/killed by an undead Fomorian, an evil giant of a past age. The problem is that no one knows where to find the dwarves, since their clan never revealed the mines' location. Only Hamarki, a mountain giant loner, living at the top of the Final Range, knows the location. The Rakasta tribes can help finding the giant, but they dislike him, and want him chased out of the region (see The Rakasta Tribes above).

To describe the dwarven mine in full detail goes beyond the scope of this article. The author recommends using *L3 Deep Dwarven Delve* to model the Syrrak clanhold. Replace Orcs with an even mix of Goblins and Hobgoblins in the upper level, and replace the Dwarven cleric and devils on the last



The Syrrak Dwarves

level with the Undead Fomorian and two controlled Dwarven wights. Finally, replace one of the magic items with the wolf's teeth necklace of the Skars.

Circa 100 Syrrak dwarves survive, imprisoned by the Undead Fomorian, on the lowest level of the mine. If they are freed (even if the Undead Fomorian is not defeated), they will gladly join the alliance, providing a small dwarven unit. If the Undead Fomorian is defeated, they will also provide a contribution to hire mercenaries.

Undead Fomorian¹

Invoked, dark pact, withered, monstrous III Rank Mummy, NE

Str 20, Int 12, Wis 10,
Dex 7, Con N/A, Cha 3

Special Abilities: cannot be harmed by weapons of less than +2 enchantment. Elemental immunity: Cold; Elemental resistance: Lightning. Rejuvenation 6/hour, needs to rest 1 day before and 1 day after rejuvenating, dies at -10 HP; Disease: spasms to touched area, 10% chance per hour for 3-6 rounds; Fear 1d8 rounds, -2 saves, induces panic; Infravision 90'; Causes Horror check on sight.

Salient Powers: Curse of Vengeance; Command Undead as 16th level Cleric, up to 48 HD of undead; Passage (3/hour, up to 25').

Vulnerabilities: can be damaged by iron (not steel!) weapons; Elemental Vulnerability: Fire and Light; Allergen (Barrier): Dragon scales; Dependence: Spirit items (holy symbol of Skuld, must be within 1 mile to use Command Undead; shroud, must be within 1 mile to benefit from Lightning resistance); Holy Water inflicts 1d8 HP damage.

AC 3; HD 13; HP 60

Movement 9;
(also, see the Passage salient power)

THAC0 9; Dmg 2d6+8 (Huge mace)

¹ The AD&D rules for custom mummies can be found in Van Richten's Guide to the Created, later collected in the Van Richten's Monster Hunter Compendium, volume I.

The Barrow of the Giant King

Entering the Barrow in the Eastern Shepherd Tribelands, is needed to recover the Banner of the Giant King, an item of historical significance, but also of magical power. Displaying the Banner in battle will summon five Cloud Giants from nearby castles, who have inherited magical geas to serve (once only) the bearer of the banner in war.

The Barrow is not described in this article. See *King of the Giantdowns* for details on the barrow itself and the events that can take place there. Alternately, the barrow may hold only the tomb of the Giant King, but his ghost may prevent the PCs from removing the banner until they have destroyed the Undead Fomorian occupying the Syrrak Clanhold.

The Night Hunter

A Wolvenfolk Necromancer, Howls-in-the-Night (m,Lu/Wolvenfolk,Ne9,LN) has taken residence in an abandoned burial mound in the Eastern Shepherd Tribelands. He knows much about the mounds and the ancient giants, but may require services (fetching magic/old items from a mound) in exchange for information. The Necromancer is raising an undead army to face the orcish army of Harak.



Howls-in-the-Night

The PCs may either meet Howls-in-the-Night when they barge into his barrow-home (probably while looking for the Barrow of the Giant King), or if his skeletons rescue them from another encounter – this latter event will happen only once, and is designed as a one-time party saver. Howl-in-the-Night's skeletons may rescue the PCs from most other encounters, assuming they are able to enter the encounter area.

Howls-in-the-Night

Male Wolenfolk Lupin, Savage
Necromancer 9, Lawful Neutral

Str 13, Int 15, Wis 16,
Dex 8, Con 15, Cha 12

Senses: Infravision 60', Detect Werewolf 83%, Detect Invisible/Ethereal +2, Blind Fighting, Tracking Wis/3, Detect race by smell Int+2, Detect individual by smell Int-2, Detect Noise 39%, ST penalty vs. sound -1.

Special Abilities: resist death (Con), +2 penalty on reaction rolls, interpret omens 1/week.

THACO: 18; Dmg: 1d6+1 or by weapon;
HP: 30

Wpn Profs: Bite, Spear

NWP: Spirit Lore, 8; Necrology, 13; Hunting, 15; Local History: Skaufskogr, 12; Ancient History: Skaufskogr, 14; Healing, 13; Read/Write Essurian Runes, 16; Languages: Lupin (Native), Heldann (Native), Elven (Shiye, 15); Spellcraft, 13; Religion: Saimpt Loup, 16; Endurance, 15; Survival, 15; Direction Sense, 17.

XP Value: 4000.

ACT III: RESOLUTION

In this last part of the adventure, the PCs are involved in the final battle between Harak's Mengul Horde and the allied forces they have gathered. Depending on whether the PCs managed to defeat the Bog Monster, or Harak did it, the battle will take place on the banks of the Sirraen river, or on the banks of the Frodhulf creek. In the first case, the allied armies are on the offensive, otherwise, Harak is leading an assault towards Frodhulf Outpost -- and Midway Haven.

Battle Setup

Table 2 reports the composition of the armies, and their statistics according to the Birthright War Cards system. It is worth noting that the smaller units will operate as a single unit (Birthright units account for companies of about 200 soldiers). If the PCs did not manage to get all the allies, then reduce the effectiveness of this mixed unit accordingly: if one small unit is missing, the mixed unit has only 2 hits. If there are only two small units, compute the stats as the average of the two, except movement which drops to the lowest value. Also, the unit has only 2 hits. If there is a single small unit, then the unit has only one hit and the listed statistics.

The PCs and the Cloud Giants, as well as any exceptional NPC (not counting the leaders of each unit), can be associated with any unit to provide bonuses. The presence of the cloud giants adds +1 to melee and ranged attack of any unit they are associated with. The PCs provide a +1 to morale, and can use their spells, if any, as per the standard rules.

Outcome

If the allied armies win the day, the Orcs are forced to withdraw to the Skarsholm, if they were camped north and west of the Bog, or behind the Sirraen if they had already moved south and east. Depending on the surviving forces, different events can take place:

- If the Bull's Head Horde is routed, minor horde chiefs overthrow Harak and the Mengul Hordes break down. Some will return to the Mengul mountains, others will try to set up power bases in Lirovka's Alps, and others will remain in the Skarsholm. However, the orcs will not be a major threat until a new leader emerges.

- If the Bull's Head Horde is not routed, and more than three other Orc units are available, Harak will attempt to seize the Old Fort. A second battle may ensue.
- If the Bull's Head Horde is not routed, but less than four other Orc units remain, Harak will retreat to the Skarsholm. He will be back in a few years, though, with greater forces.

If the Orcs win, then the allied forces scatter. The elves, rakasta, dwarves, and vatski and vrodnik forces flee to their home territories. The Alphetians withdraw to Midway Haven, while the Bugbears, if they survive, turn coat on the PCs and ally with Harak. The other

Table 2: Unit listing.

Unit	Type and size	Mv/Me/De/Mo/Ch/Rg
<i>The Mengul Hordes</i>		
Bull's Head Horde	40 Ogres, 160 Orcs infantry	1/4/3/3/-/1
Orc infantry	200 Orc light infantry (4 units)	1/3/2/2/-/1
Orc archers	200 Orc archers (2 units)	1/1/2/2/-/3
<i>Main allied units</i>		
Heldanner Clans	400 human irregulars (2 units)	2/3/2/2/-/2
Vatski Boyars	200 human cavalry	3/3/3/2/5/1
Vrodnik Infantry	200 human heavy infantry	1/3/3/2/-/-
Lupin Tribes	200 lupin scouts	3/2/2/2/-/3
Elf Clans	200 elf archers	2/2/2/3/-/5
The Night Hunt	200 skeletons	1/2/3/3/-/-
<i>Small allied units</i>	Mixed, see below (statistics given here are for the mixed unit)	1/3/3/2/-/2
Alphetian Garrison	40 human infantry	1/3/3/2/-/-
Rakasta tribes	40 rakasta scouts	3/1/2/2/-/4
Syrak Dwarves	20 dwarf guards	1/3/4/3/-/2
Bugbear Tribe	30 bugbears	2/4/4/1/-/2
Cloud Giants	5 cloud giants	

forces, if they survive, remain under the control of the PCs, and must retreat to one of the adjacent territories (Lirovka's Alps, the Heldann Shepherds Tribelands, or Midway Haven). They can attempt a comeback, although this will be doomed unless the PCs can gather more forces.

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Teeuwynn Woodruff, Van Richten's Guide to the Created, TSR, 1994
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Tim Beach and Bruce Heard, [The Savage Coast Campaign Book](#), TSR, 1996
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Who's Who in the Wurmsteeth part 3

Continued from [page 165](#)

several dragons all around Norwold are loyal to the Dragonking, as explained in Threshold issue #8, many humans and humanoids in the various Norwold communities serve the dragons.

Several important figures in Norwold are (normally in secret) close allies of the Dragon Kingdom, such as Quentin Jax¹, Beriak Alanira², Avel Vankomirovich³, or Nazariy Zhucharnov⁴, who is influenced by

the green dragon Zilant, an ally of the Wurmsteeth. All the Vatski lands west of the Wurmsteeth kingdom are somehow influenced by the dragons, as Tugar protects Vyolstagrads and Svartbak the black and the Church of Idris are trying to manipulate Stamtral and Gunvolod. Likewise, probably many others agents of the Wurmsteeth Kingdom or its enemy, mainly Vitriol and the Church of Idris, may be present in the courts of Alpha and Oceansend, and in any other Norwold community.

¹ See Rogues, Barons and Pretenders by Simone Neri, in Threshold issue #8, page 106

² See The Great Land Rush of Norwold part 2 by Simone Neri, in Threshold issue #8, page 15

³ See The Great Land Rush of Norwold part 2 by Simone Neri, in Threshold issue #8, page 34

⁴ See The Great Land Rush of Norwold part 2 by Simone Neri, in Threshold issue #8,

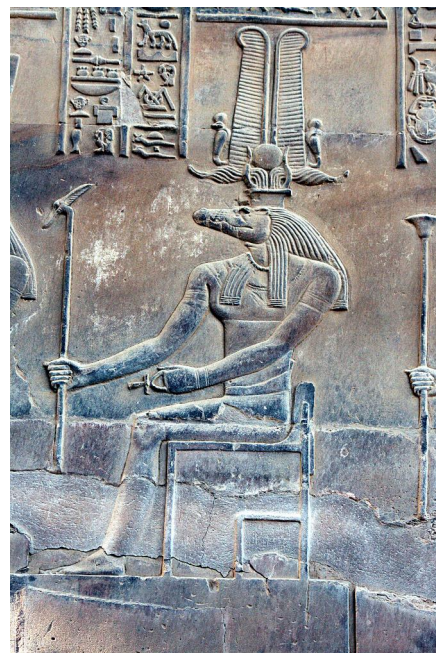
page 44

koskatep level 8

mokrath, serpent eye

by

Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)*

*Akrash enthroned*

Akrash the victorious has conquered the sacred city of the fairy queen, and kept it from her grasp for thirty cycles of the sun. For this great deed the Sorcerer King, in his eternal wisdom, has pardoned his rebellion. Mokrath will send to Mogreth gems and slaves. Mogreth will send to Mokrath cloth and tools. A portal will be opened, as the road is infested with human bandits and other filthy creatures of Grondheim and Taymora.

*Written on an ancient Mogrethian tablet,
circa 2050 BC.*

* Many ideas for this level come from the work of Geoff Gander about Mogreth that can be seen in [the namesake Piazza thread](#), also [collected at the Vaults of Pandius](#). Further links to Geoff Gander's work about Mogreth and the Outer Beings will follow in the rest of the article.

SECRETS OF KOSKATEP, LEVEL 8

This level can be reached going down from the trapdoor in area 5B or even through the chasm in area 1 in Level 7 (Kosmoteiros, published in Issue 9 of Threshold magazine). The PCs will find themselves in **Level 8, Mokrath**, once a city of living lizardmen and troglodytes, now inhabited only by the dead.

The text below repeats the original description of this level in issue 1 of Threshold Magazine (Mirror of Eternal Night article). Read on to discover more on this level of Koskatep!

Lizardmen and troglodytes lived here for a century in ancient times, and they made scaly decorations, serpent heads, and eyes drawn and sculpted on the walls, giving this level a slightly disquieting look. Gems were inlaid everywhere, but were long ago plundered by Taymorans and only empty sockets remain now. Just for fun, The Last One has awakened a hundred remains of ancient lizardmen and troglodytes to infest this level. Most of them are zombies, many of them are mummies, and some are vampires with magical abilities. They would gladly turn against him if given the chance.

The secret: One of the lizardmen, once a shaman, knows how to open a portal to the Blight Swamp. He would like to search for the descendants of his people there, and proposes an alliance to anyone working against The Last One.

When the Darkers arrive, they will strike a bargain with the lizardman shaman, so this level will be full of lizardmen and troglodytes alive and undead, busy opening portals to contact all of their kind living in western Karameikos in order to win them over to the cause of Nyx.

Relevant history (expanded from issue 1 of Threshold)¹

2.379 BC: The Queen of Grondheim conquers the city, renaming it Krystallac. Just a few years later sidhe priests discover the existence of the inner temple and begin a century long negotiation with the Sollux and the Brutemen below to gain access to the artifact.

2.282 BC: As the Queen grows impatient about the unwillingness of Ixion to compromise, she sends her best troops to open the temple. Inti troops soon attack the place, and Taymora intervenes shortly thereafter. This is the beginning of the War of the Empires, or the War of Southern Grondheim, that will last decades and will devastate the region. Mogreth intervenes as well a few years later. During this time all the major powers occupy the city for a while. Mogrethian general Akrash conquers the city in 2091 BC but is forced to leave it two years later due to insufficient support from his homeland.

2.080 BC: In a time of crisis in Grondheim, Taymora, and Intua, lizardmen and troglodytes, under the leadership of the lizardman general Akrash, occupy Krystallac and keep it for a hundred years.

2.050 BC: A permanent portal, the Verdant Pool, is opened between Mokrath and Mogreth. Other magical properties of the Verdant Pool are soon discovered.

¹ Several details of this history come from my [History of Traladara](#). Other histories may differ, as the one presented in issue 1 of Threshold magazine did (History of Karameikos by Simone Neri, page 37), but this timeline could easily fit into them too.

2.000 BC: The Mogrethian flood devastates the reptilian empire, cutting any support to Mokrath. Reptilian refugees however reach the city, bolstering its defence for a while but soon creating an overpopulation problem that will contribute to the fall of the city.

1.976 BC: After a long siege Taymora conquers Mokrath and renames it Kosmoteiros. Nyx knows about Ixion's artifact but rather than try to steal or destroy it she decides to exploit the magical aura of the place to build her own, stronger, artifact that will bring fulfillment of her Dream. Mokrath is sacked, sealed and abandoned, but many inhabitants escape through the Verdant Pool and scatter into the world.

1.777 BC: To prevent Kosmoteiros from falling into the hands of Thanatos, the priests of Nyx destroy the city with a terrible earthquake. Thousands die and the place is abandoned for many years as seismic activity increases in the area. The chasm awakens the ghosts of the lizardman shaman Kirish and of general Akrash, who feeds on Taymoran souls.

1.664 BC: After the destruction of Taymora, fairies of the Unseelie court take possession of the place and try to use the Starlake, but do not know of the hidden temple of Ixion below. Kirish tries to attack them but is banished. Akrash hides among them for a while, but is eventually discovered and likewise banished.

1.597 BC: Lord Keiros, a Tal nosferatu and follower of Nyx, conquers Koskatep from the dark fairies. Vampiric followers of Thanatos attack several times but are defeated. Kirish sends some ghostly minions against Lord

Keiros, but they are defeated and he is forced to hide. Level 8 is sealed again.

1.412 BC: Hutaakans conquer the site for Ixion and Pflarr, a seriously wounded Lord Keiros is forced to hide, and his followers are exterminated. The dead of Mokrath sleep undisturbed in their sealed level.

1.021 BC: Orcs sack Koskatep, some hutaakan priests survive hiding in the lower levels, and will become more guardians for the hidden temple of Ixion. Kirish and the lizardmen are awakened by their passage, and capture some hutaakans.

954 BC: After several battles a dwarven army defeats the orcs and conquers Koskatep, but are soon in constant warfare with the gnolls that rule over the region. Levels 5 and below are sealed again.

912 BC: The dwarves are finally defeated by the gnolls, who build their own city over the ruins. Shamans of Ranivorus and Thanatos begin to study the Starlake. Gnoll explorers reach Level 8 and are attacked by ghostly lizardmen, so Level 8 is closed again.

841 BC: Followers of Nyx, aided by ogres and giants, attack Koskatep but are unable to conquer the gnolls; yet they succeed in killing the most powerful shamans of Thanatos and burning their notes.

603 BC: The ogre king Kulfan conquers Koskatep in the name of Nyx and ogres rule over the area for centuries. Human priests of the Lady of the Night live in the city along with them. Kirish tries to contact the followers of Nyx, but Akrash attacks them and the lizardmen ghosts are banished.

95 AC: The Darkers almost complete the ritual to use the Starlake and bring forth the Eternal Night, but are stopped at the last moment by priests of Ixion, who drive out the ogres and occupy Koskatep for years. Cleansing of all the Levels down to the 10th by the priests insures that the lizardmen ghosts maintain their deep slumber.

227 AC: The priests of Ixion have repelled several attempts by ogres, giants and followers of Nyx trying to reclaim the ruins, but are destroyed at last by The Last One, a very powerful and ancient vampire sent by Thanatos. Some of them escape to the lowest level and become defenders of the inner temple. In the following centuries ogres, giants, followers of Nyx and even adventurers sent by Ixion try to reclaim Koskatep, but The Last One destroys them all. The Last One awakens the lizardmen ghosts and gives bodies to them, establishing an alliance with Akrash. Kirish hides from Akrash and The Last One.

998 AC (or later if the DM prefers): Lady Sonya, the Granddaughter of the Night, a powerful priestess of Nyx, and her followers, are able to defeat The Last One and reclaim Koskatep.

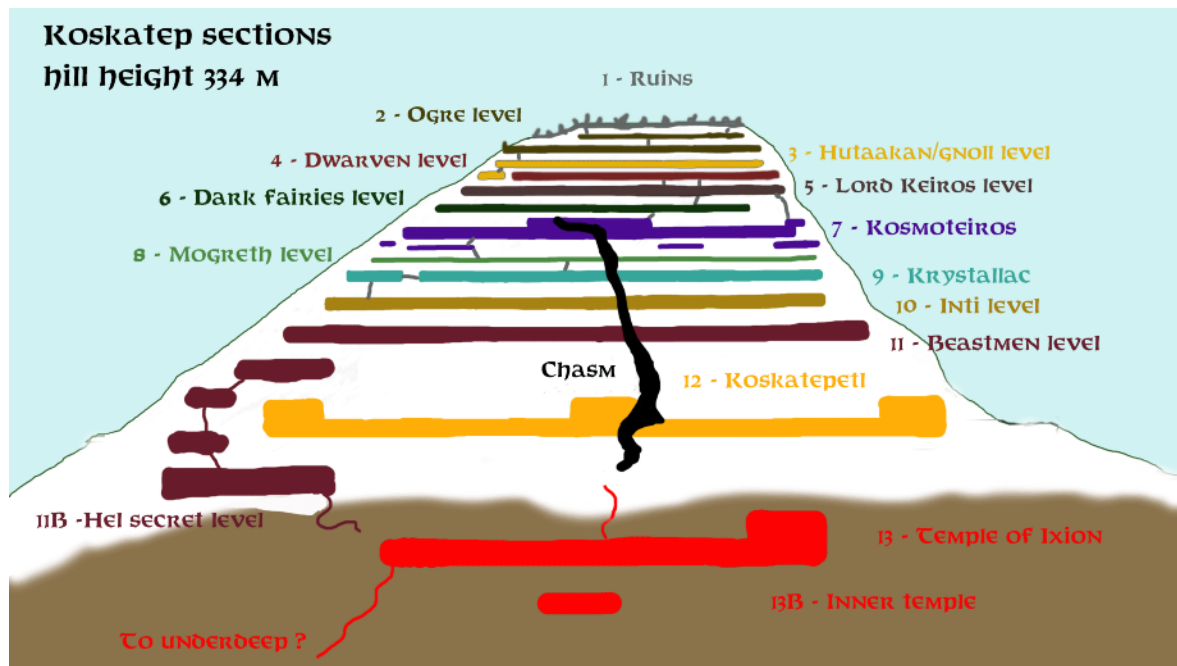
1031 AC: The next alignment. On this date the Starlake could be used to bring forth The Eternal Night.

The Random Critters table of level 2B (in issue 3 of Threshold magazine) and the **Wandering Parties** table may apply here if the DM wishes so. In this case there is a 1% chance in each room that a Wandering Party will be encountered. There is also a 30% chance that such creatures or people are already under The Last One's control, and will therefore try to capture or trick the party. The **Followers of The Last One** encounter table of level 1 (in issue 2 of Threshold magazine, page 122), can also still be used here if the DM wishes so. One such follower could try to join the PCs to explore this level, with the final purpose of bringing them in the presence of The Last One himself (in Level 7). After the Darkers take control (see issue 1) any Follower of The Last One will obviously keep a much lower profile and maybe even aid the party against the Darkers to use them or lead them to their deaths.

Spells that provide magical transportation, such as teleport, passwall, dimensional door, magic door, travel, gate and spells such as clairvoyance and find the path do not work on this level as on Levels 5, 6 and 7 due to powerful wards placed by The Last One and others before him. The DM could decide to apply the same rule to the levels above the 5th, at least from Level 2 and below, particularly if the PCs are of high level. There is also a magical alarm in place all over this level: whenever a clerical or magical spell is cast¹, Akrash will sense it and the general direction of the caster. Secretly, Kirish has his own alarm too, and will try to warn any caster as soon as he senses them.

¹ Including bard spells, and spell like effects from magical items. Each DM may also decide that the simple presence of a magical item may trigger the alarm, and even psionic powers, if allowed in the campaign.

koskatep, level 8



The Level and its inhabitants

The original lizardmen city was sacked by the Taymorans in 1776 BC and most of its stones were eventually plundered to build Kosmoteiros above. In a few years, Mokrath was completely buried, however the earthquake of 1777 BC, subsequent collapses, and wandering creatures eventually cleared some of the rubble. Now the city, which had thousands of living inhabitants at its height, is inhabited only by undead lizardmen and troglodytes, some corporeal and some not. Their exact number and power should be left to the DM's discretion depending on the PC's levels. All the indicated levels are indeed just suggestions to be weakened or augmented by the DM as they see fit. Not all the areas of the city nor all its inhabitants will be detailed, as there are too many, so each DM may add many more as he or she prefers.

Some of the undead may have magical lights, otherwise the level is completely dark.

Three great magical fires burn over the still standing temples, upon Akrash's order, and are visible from many areas of the city. The light yellow areas however should not be considered clear, but a labyrinth of rubble and huge rocks, with an average visibility of under 10 feet.

About the map

The Green path is the main road of Mokrath, covered in green tiles still in a surprisingly good condition. In dark grey is the solid stone of the Koskatep hill that encases the city. The light brown lines are the former external and internal walls of the city, partially collapsed or now buried in the hill. In dark brown the structures that the undead lizardmen rebuilt or repaired in the last few centuries. In light blue the waterways that have survived the destruction of the city, maintained by waters falling from the levels above and small springs in this level. Some of the waterways are relatively clear, others are stagnant and fetid.

As said above, most areas are dark or only partially illuminated by magical lights, if PCs do not bring their own light. If they do bring light, of course, it makes the party quite visible.

The Black area is the Chasm opened by the Kosmoteiros earthquake of 1777 BC, which goes all the way down to Level 12.

1 - Frogfolk Temple

This great temple, now mostly ruined, was once dedicated to the Cult of the Frog or Way of Irrub¹, the religion that many frogfolk followed at the time of Mogreth. The religion was considered blasphemous by the dominant Outer Beings' faith², but King Akrash (see area 8 for his description) allowed it openly in Mokrath. In the last centuries however he has forbidden the undead frogfolk to gather here. They do that anyway in secret, practicing their religion in the lower levels of the temple, which is a pyramid five stories high. **2d20+5 undead frogfolk**³ (HD 2-5) may be encountered in the two lower levels at any time. They have a pale, sickly appearance but their bodies are whole. They have a paralysis ability similar to ghouls. The surface area of the temple's complex is roamed instead by an **undead tyrannosaur** (20 HD). The creature has normal attacks similar to a living one, but all the undead immunities and weaknesses. It can be damaged by holy water and turned as a phantom. It was placed here by Akrash to keep the frogfolk away from their former temple, but they have learned to distract it enough to pass. The great green paved road passes to the left of the temple and leads to the interior of the city. Once it began with a grand double bronze door in the upper west corner of Mokrath, long collapsed and destroyed.

Some time after the arrival of the Darkers, when Kirish (see area 13 for his description) strikes a deal with them and takes control of this level, the

¹ See "[Religion in Mogreth](#)" by Geoff Gander

² Discover more about the Outer Beings, if you dare, in "[Insanity, Horror, and the Outer Beings in Mystara](#)".

³ Different takes on the Frogfolk who originally appeared in DA2 Temple of the Frog may be found in "[Frog-Folk](#)" by Andrew Theisen and "[Frog-folk](#)" by Jamie Baty

1 - There is a treasure trove of religious objects and weapons in the two lower levels of the pyramid, some of them magical, but anyone touching them will soon hear the Outer Beings' voices, and risk madness. Devious DM's may find more information about the use of Outer Beings in several [unspeakable places](#), unholy [books](#) and other [dark corners](#) of the Vaults of Pandius, or [elsewhere](#). Clues and history about the ancient Temple of the Frog of Blackmoor may also be found here if the DM wished so.



Decoration of the Frogfolk temple

undead tyrannosaur will be eliminated. Frogfolk will be able to freely attend the temple, but Kirish eventually will try to sway them away from the Outer Beings and convert them to his faith in Ka. **3d20+7 undead frogfolk** will be in the area at any time.

2 - Frogfolk Quarter

The whole south eastern area of Mokrath was the frogfolk quarter at the height of the city. The area is now a massive pile of rubble and ruins, with few walls and buildings still standing. A relevant number of **undead frogfolk** dwells here. There is a 5% chance every turn (10 minutes) that the PCs encounter 1d6+2 normal undead frogfolk (HD 2 with paralysis touch) and a 1% chance every two turns that they encounter 1d4 superior undead frogfolk (as nosferatus, with clerical or magical abilities). It may take from 3 to 9 turns, at least, to cross this area walking outside the green road, more if the PCs are searching for treasure.

After the Darkers' conquest the frogfolk could start to receive materials to slowly repair and rebuild their quarter, a course of action Kirish will encourage. Kirish also plans to find living frogfolk to help rebuild the city, bringing them here through the Verdant Pool (area 8) from the Blight Swamp, the Malpheggi Swamp or elsewhere.

3 - Wall of Glory and access to Level 7

This area has statues and trophies that celebrate the glories and the victories of general and King Akrash. They were partially destroyed or decayed during the centuries, but Akrash had them repaired, mostly, in the last few centuries. **2d10 undead lizardmen guards** (HD3 and paralysis attack as ghouls) and a **undead lizardman captain** (9 HD vampire) are always posted here, guarding Akrash's monuments. This area is quite smelly as

2 - There are objects and weapons dating back to the times of Mokrath in this area. Some of them can be useful, or even magical, and even free from the Outer Beings touch. Several of them however are still in the unliving hands of undead frogfolk.

3 - The statues and trophies mounted by Akrash in this area include bronze, silver and gold objects, magical weapons and gems. Besides the guards however there is also a magical alarm in place, which alerts more guards in areas 4 and 8, and a magical trap which hits anyone touching the treasures with a chain lightning bolt.

the northern river is muddy and stagnant.

The stairs coming down from the Starlake in Level 7 (area 5B) arrive in this area, behind an inconspicuous pile of rubble. The lizardmen guards should check them too, but often forget about it as they know the level above is controlled by The Last One. If they spot or capture some intruders, however, they will deliver them to the undead guards of the level above.

Small **undead aquatic dinosaurs** (HD 2-7 with undead immunities and weaknesses) also live in the river.

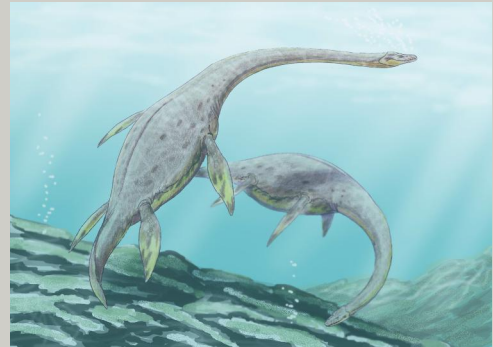
After the Darkers' arrival and Kirish's takeover of this level the trophies will be taken down and brought to the treasury in the Palace (area 8). Eventually Kirish plans to put some statues of Ka and other Immortals here.

4 - Soldiers House

One of the few repaired buildings of Mokrath, once a barracks for the guards of the northern gate (which collapsed long ago and is now buried), now even a bigger building which houses **4d10+4 undead lizardmen guards** (HD3 and paralysis attack as ghouls) and **2 undead lizardman captain** (9 HD vampires), stands here. Around the building more undead lizardmen soldiers live (or at least roam) as this was in the past the Soldiers Quarter of the city.

The guards here will take any captured intruders to the Palace in area 8, where Akrash will decide if they have to be sacrificed to the Outer Beings or to Thanatos.

When The Darkers arrive and Kirish takes control of this level, nothing will change for the soldiers here. They will still follow orders and obey the ruler of the city. Eventually Kirish plans to post living guards here too, after they start to arrive through the Verdant Pool.



The aquatic dinosaurs

4 - There are a lot of weapons and armor in the hands of the undead lizardmen guards and in the armory of the building. None of them is cursed by evil deities and some of them are magical, but the armory's door has two traps, one mundane (a poison needle) and one magical (a fireball).

5 - Slaves Pen

This huge area once housed the slaves of Mokrath, mostly humans, beastmen and some fairy folk. Now it is infested with **Wraiths (HD 5)** and **Spectres (HD 7)** of former slaves or adventurers, raised by The Last One or Akrash in the last centuries. They roam a vast area attacking anyone who gets near.

When The Darkers arrive and Kirish takes control, he will ask their help in dealing with the incorporeal undead. The Darkers will happily oblige, offering to the wraiths and the spectres the chance to join them and become Uncorporeals¹.

6 - Bureaucracy Quarter

This area was once the bureaucrats quarter of Mokrath. It still houses a relevant number of **undead lizardmen** (HD2 and paralysis attack as ghouls). Akrash has put them to work as they did in their former lives, even if what they do now has little meaning. The lizardmen of this area will not be automatically hostile and will speak calmly to any intruders in their language. They will not attack unless forced to defend themselves. As soon as the intruders leave however, they will send someone to the Palace (area 8) to warn the guards.

When The Darkers arrive and Kirish rules, the bureaucracy will continue business as usual with a new purpose, as the undead shaman will assign

¹ More information about the Uncorporeals, special Nyx's undead, are in Threshold issue #1, page 146.

5 - There are objects and weapons of any kind in this area, mostly former possessions of adventurers slain by the undead during the centuries. The DM may also decide that some magical objects lay here too.



Image of a human slave adoring Akrash

6 - There are buildings still standing here and others being repaired by the undead lizardmen. Items, money, gems and weapons are also present in this quarter, mostly behind closed doors or in possession of the undead lizardmen.

them many tasks to prepare the city to return to its former glory, and with many more living inhabitants.

7 - Artisans Quarter

This area was inhabited by artisans during the height of Mokrath. Now some of them still live and work here as **undead lizardmen** and some rare **undead troglodytes** (both HD 2 and paralysis attack as ghouls). The buildings of the area are mostly ruined and the repairwork goes slow, as any other work here, for the lack of supplies from the external world.

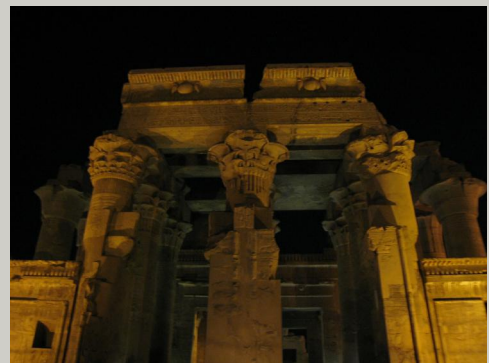
As in the previous area, the inhabitants of this quarter will not attack intruders automatically, but will warn the guards in area 8 of their presence as soon as possible.

When Kirish takes control the Artisans Quarter will be slowly renovated and eventually, if Kirish's plan succeeds, new living inhabitants and new artisans will come to live and work here.

8 - Akrash Palace and the Verdant Pool

This huge and majestic building was the main palace of King Akrash at the height of Mokrath and now it is again. Despite that the building is not in perfect condition as it was abandoned for many centuries. Even if Akrash has a new body since shortly after The Last One's arrival in 227 AC, the lack of labourers and material has made a full restoration difficult. Many internal walls do not exist anymore or are under construction. The palace inhabitants include at least **100 undead troglodyte servants** (HD 2), **100 undead lizardmen commoners** (mostly females, HD 2),

7 - There are objects and weapons of any kind in this quarter, some quite precious and magical, but guarded normally or behind closed doors, as in the previous area. Thieves, if caught, will be pursued and attacked by the undead inhabitants, who will also call the guards in area 8.



Entrance of Akrash's Palace

8 - There are wonderful treasures of any kind in Akrash's palace, mostly guarded by undead lizardmen, wraiths and spectres (mostly victims of past sacrifices whose souls were taken by Akrash's clerics), mundane (poisonous) and magical traps. The most precious treasures are also often defended by magical alarms which alert the guards if someone other than Akrash or his immediate family touches them. If the DM wishes so, the Verdant Pool could

100 undead lizardmen guards (HD 3-7) and 10 undead lizardmen captains (HD 9-15). The palace also houses the private chambers of **General King Akrash (HD 20 nosferatu warrior)** and **his now undead family** (a wife, a son, two daughters, a mother, an aunt, four cousins with spouses and 12 sons); all lizardmen (HD 1-10). When he founded Mokrath, Akrash was in search of a place far away from Mogreth, as his tenuous faith in the Outer Beings had put him in bad standing. However, in the face of his success and his domination of the region, the Sorcerer King of his home city¹ had to forgive him, and the power of Mokrath grew and grew for years. After the flood destroyed Mogreth in 2000 BC, Mokrath was also flooded by refugees. The overpopulation contributed to the fall of the city in 1976 BC, in part because many Mogrethian refugees felt no loyalty toward a heretic such as the King of Mokrath. Akrash died fighting the Taymorans with all his family, here in the Palace. Unable to rest, he awakened again as a ghost in 1777 BC and feasted on the souls of defeated Taymorans. By this time, his hatred of Taymorans and humans in general had pushed him toward worship of the Outer Beings, and he started competing with Kirish for the control of the city. In 1651 BC Akrash was discovered by the dark fairies, while trying to steal some of their magic, and was banished for centuries by their magic. He regained conscience only around 600 BC, when Kirish was trying to cooperate with the followers of Nyx at the court of the ogre King Kulfan. Akrash's hatred awakened him again, he caused the failure of Kirish's negotiation and was banished once more. Only in 227 AC The Last One's magic brought him back into a physical body. Since then Akrash has been wholeheartedly dedicated to the service of The Last One and the cause of Thanatos, considering it fully compatible with the

also be modified to open a portal to where some ancient Carnifex sleeps¹.

¹ The DM may choose the most appropriate Sorcerer King from this [“Mogreth NPCs”](#) article at the Vaults of Pandius.

¹ Maybe using the adventure idea [“Legend of Soolkhir”](#) by John Calvin (Chimpman).

Outer Beings' faith. His true purpose however, after The Last One succeeds in using the Starlake to open a permanent portal to the home plane of Thanatos (in 1031 AC, see Level 7, Kosmoteiros, in Threshold issue #9), is to use the portal to create a foothold in Mystara for the Outer Beings. It's hard to say if The Last One (and Thanatos) are aware of Akrash's true plan.

Akrash's wife and some of his family (two daughters and a cousin) have decided to oppose him, allying with Kirish once a favorable circumstance arises. Others (his son and two cousins) are instead fanatically loyal to him and the Outer Beings.

If PC's are brought to the presence of Akrash, he will decide to sacrifice them to Thanatos or to the Outer Beings, depending on the stars' alignments (a calculation will be made by one of his loyal cousins, who is also a wizard and an astronomer).

The bottom left corner of the Palace is dominated by **The Verdant Pool**, a small, green, body of water which was also a permanent portal to Isshum, the capital of Mogreth. As the city is now under the Dawn Sea, Akrash and most of the clerics and wizards among his kin and captains, are trying to modify it to make it open to another location where lizardmen are common, such as the Blight or Malpheggi Swamps. Should they succeed, they could repopulate Mokrath with living lizardmen, but also risk catching the attention of powerful beings such as black dragons, or even Thalkor¹.

The Verdant Pool is also an ideal hatching place for lizardmen eggs. Unfortunately the undead lizardmen could not use the pool in such a way for many centuries.

When Kirish takes control of the palace she will destroy Akrash and his loyal followers with the aid of the Darkers (but Akrash and his followers could

¹ Dragon ruler of the Malpheggi Swamp, see ["Who's Who Among Dragons"](#) or the previous issue of Threshold Magazine.

be able to hide in the basements of the temple in area 10, in area 13 as Kirish did or even in Level 10 where The Last One will escape after his initial defeat, see previous issues of Threshold magazine). Kirish and his entourage will then live here in the Palace, working relentlessly to modify the Verdant Pool as Akrash was trying to do. They too may risk disturbing some Carnifex resting place or some hideous Outer Being's location, if the DM wishes so.

9 - Shrine to Thanatos and access to Level 9

This temple was not originally dedicated to Thanatos at the time of Mokrath, but to the Immortals not included in the Temple of the World (area 11), as Ka and others. Akrash rebuilt it in the last centuries as a temple of Thanatos to appease The Last One when he received his new body. **1d4+1 undead lizardmen shamans** (HD 9 nosferatu with clerical abilities) are always here with **1d6 undead lizardmen commoners** (HD 2 with paralysis ability).

In the basement of the temple there is a hatch which opens into a staircase spiralling down to Level 9 (Krystallac, which will be featured in issue #11 of Threshold magazine). As Akrash feared, and still fears, the magical powers of the fairies (even more so after the dark fairies banished him for centuries in 1651 BC), he has always kept this hatch well closed, trapped and alarmed.

A perpetual flame burns on the last level of the temple on Akrash's orders, guarded by one of the lizardmen shamans.

When The Darkers arrive some of The Last One's minions will probably use this passage to escape with him to Level 10 (even if he and others will be able to do that in mist form), so the hatch will no longer be closed and trapped. Eventually Kirish plans to explore and use the level below, but he will not be able to do that before The Last One

9 - In the basement there is also a secret room which contains the treasure of the temple, mostly ritual objects and weapons dedicated to Thanatos (and therefore cursed for anyone who doesn't belong to the same faith). Remains of past sacrifices also litter the floors (mostly adventurers who managed to arrive this far and were sacrificed by the shamans under Akrash's orders).

strikes back (see The Battle in this Level paragraph here and in previous issues of Threshold Magazine for further details about events after The Last One's initial defeat). Kirish will immediately destroy any Thanatos objects found here and will rededicate the temple to Nyx. **1d6+1 undead lizardmen shamans of Nyx** (HD 9 nosferatu with clerical abilities) will always be here. Some Darkers could also be present occasionally. After some time, if Kirish is able to open the Verdant Pool, some living lizardmen shamans could also be here.

10 - Temple of the Faith

This building was the Temple of the Faith at the height of Mokrath, where Outer Beings were worshipped according to the official Mogrethian faith (see note 3). During Mokrath's times, not many inhabitants followed the traditional faith, but now Akrash officially permits only the cult of Thanatos and the Faith. The temple is partially ruined by the chasm that cuts into this level from the level above and down to the 12th level. The chasm is wet from water that drips from above and can have random teleportation effects (see area 1 in Level 7, in the previous issue of Threshold). Akrash has arranged for the chasm to be partially covered here and he plans to close it completely. In the meantime **2d10+2 undead lizardmen guards** (HD 3 and paralysis ability as ghouls) are always here, together with **2d10+1 undead lizardmen commoners** (HD 2 and paralysis ability) and **1d4+1 Outer Beings undead shamans** (HD 9-11 nosferatu with clerical abilities).

A perpetual flame burns on the last level of the temple on Akrash's orders, guarded by one of the lizardman shamans.

When The Darkers arrive and Kirish takes control, he will close the temple, and eventually the chasm too. If Kirish discovers the secret resting place of

10 - There are all kinds of unholy objects and weapons in the basement of the temple. All are tainted by the Outer Beings' touch as explained in the area 1 sidebar. A secret room known only to shamans also contains an unanimated **Carnifex mummy**. The Carnifex were the rulers of the first Mogrethian Empire (5500-3800 BC), extremely powerful in magic. Akrash found the mummy and hopes to use it to gain his magical power, but he doesn't know how yet. He has not shared this knowledge with The Last One, and only three of his most trusted shamans (including his son and a cousin) know of the mummy. If they can manage to wake the Carnifex, he would be a powerful nosferatu wizard (HD 20) and could be able to take control of Akrash and all this level. In this occurrence the Carnifex, whose name in life was Shak-ikrath, could use his powers to conquer the whole of Koskatep and open a portal for the Outer Beings to Mystara.

the Carnifex, he could try to awaken him too with the aid of the Darkers, as they do not know much of his race and his powers.

11 - Temple of the World

This building, once the biggest temple of the city, was dedicated to Protius, Ixion and Ordana (see note 3), once the most revered immortals in Mokrath. The temple is surprisingly well preserved, but Akrash no longer allows the worship of these immortals. Shaga, once a priestess of Ordana, now hides in area 13 with Kirish. **2d10+2 undead lizardmen guards** (HD 3 and paralysis ability as ghouls) are always here to keep the rebels of area 13 away from the temple. The moat around the temple is also infested with small **undead aquatic dinosaurs** (HD 2-7 with undead immunities and weaknesses).

A perpetual flame burns on the last level of the temple on Akrash's orders, even if the building is not used by the cult anymore.

When Kirish takes control of this level he will reopen this temple to the cult of undead and, hopefully, living lizardmen and other inhabitants of the city. **Shaga** (see area 13) will be the high priestess of Ordana and **1d10+2 undead lizardmen shamans** will also be here with her at any time. Two **undead hutaakan priests of Ixion** (see area 13) will also be here, probably with some apprentices too, after some time.



Great column of the temple

11 - There are objects and weapons pertaining to the faith of the Immortals once revered here in the basement of the temple. Akrash has used some of them in magical rituals or sacrifices to the Outer Beings and plans to do the same with the rest. A cleric of the immortals mentioned above may be drawn to the location of such magical items in order to save them from their current use.

12 - Troglodyte Houses

This quarter, and all the southeastern corner of the city, was the quarter inhabited by troglodytes at the height of Mokrath. A relevant number of **undead troglodytes** dwell here. There is a 5% chance every turn (10 minutes) that the PCs encounter 1d8+1 normal undead troglodytes (HD 2-4 with paralysis touch) and a 1% chance every two turns that they encounter 1d6 superior undead troglodytes (HD 9-12 as nosferatus, with clerical or magical abilities). Most of the buildings here are in poor repair and the inhabitants are only nominally loyal to Akrash. Some of them will come and obey if lizardmen guards and shamans come here calling for them, but normally they try to avoid Akrash and his minions entirely.

When The Darkers arrive, the troglodytes will soon join Kirish in overthrowing Akrash. Kirish will reward them by providing, eventually, material to rebuild their houses. Also he will work to bring living troglodytes here to rebuilt the area completely.

13 - Rebel Quarter

This huge area, the entire southern quarter of the city, was inhabited by troglodytes and other minor races at the time of Mokrath, including caymen, gatormen, chameleon men, tortles and some free humans, beastmen, fairies and dwarves. Now it is the hideout of the rebels lead by the former shaman of Ka, **Kirish (HD 18 nosferatu)** and the former shaman of Ordana, **Shaga (HD 15 nosferatu with clerical abilities)**. While Shaga maintained her clerical powers despite her undead status, after she was raised by The Last One along with the others in 227 AC, the story of Kirish is different. The former shaman of Ka died in the fall

12 - There are many objects and weapons in this area, all belonging to the undead troglodytes. There are however also some abandoned houses which could contain precious objects forgotten centuries ago.



Wall decoration in the rebel quarter

13 - A great part of the objects and weapons which were in this area has been gathered and hidden by Kirish and his followers in recent centuries. The Quarter is big however, so hidden caches of treasures and weapons may still be around in several ruined houses.

of Mokrath of 1976 BC like many others, but as Akrash he awakened as a ghost when Kosmoteiros was destroyed in 1777 BC. Shortly after, he discovered the dark fairies of Kundrak and tried to attack them, but was defeated. At the time, he was still subordinate to Akrash, but as his master disappeared for centuries, Kirish was free. He met Lord Keiros in 1595 BC and tried to attack him, considering him a Taymoran enemy, yet was impressed by his opponent's reasons. Defeated, he was sealed here in level 8 until in 1021 BC hutaakans escaping the orcs passed through this level. He captured two hutaakan priests, turning them into ghosts. With time however, they became more friends than thralls. When the followers of Nyx returned in 603 BC, Kirish was able to speak peacefully with some of them, his former hatred for Taymorans too far away in the past. The awakening of Akrash however destroyed his coming alliance with the followers of Nyx, and both he and Akrash were banished for centuries.

When The Last One awakened the undead inhabitants of this level in 227 AC and gave them bodies, Kirish awakened too, along with Shaga and the **two hutaakan priests (HD 9 as nosferatu with clerical abilities)**. They soon gathered a sizable group of lizardmen, caymen, gatormen and chameleon men rebels, all unwilling to bow before Akrash and his rekindled faith in the Outer Beings. Kirish has lost his faith in Ka at this point, and is now rather looking at Nyx as a prospective patroness. Shaga and the two hutaakan priests plan instead to revive the temple in area 11.

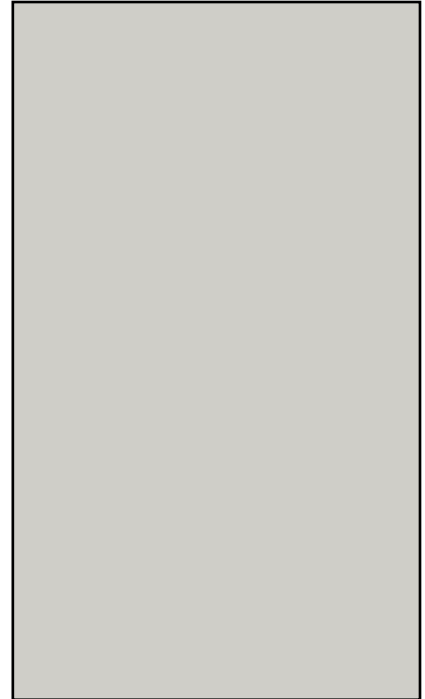
They are allied and have several followers between **undead lizardmen, caymen, gatormen and chameleon men (HD 1-12 with paralysis ability as ghouls)**.

There is a 5% chance every turn (10 minutes) that the PCs encounter a patrol 1d10+1 rebels here, with a 10% chance that one of them is a nosferatu

(HD 9-12) with clerical or magical abilities.

When The Darkers arrive and conquer the level above, Kirish will be aware of the situation as probably some of The Last One's minions will escape through this level to reach level 10, and Akrash's minions will be quite agitated too. Kirish will soon try to contact the Darkers and will succeed, staging the rebellion that will overthrow Akrash.

Kirish will then become a priest of Nyx and will do anything he can to promote his newfound faith, even if he will not immediately outlaw the frogfolk cult, nor the Temple of the World. Eventually however he will have to confront both the Outer Being's cult of the frogfolk and the living cult of the Temple of the World, as neither can easily coexist with Nyx's philosophy.



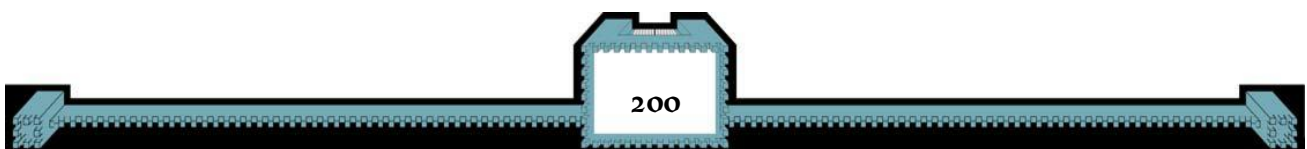
THE BATTLE ON THIS LEVEL

There will be no initial battle on this level, as the Darkers will stop when they will conquer Level 7 above from The Last One, as explained in Threshold issue #9. The Last One will escape through this level to hide in Level 10. The undead lizardmen will let him pass, and Akrash will promise him help to strike back at the Darkers.

Yet, some time after the Darkers takeover, Kirish will succeed in contacting them, bypassing Akrash. Then there will be a battle here, and Akrash will be overthrown by the combined forces of the rebels in area 13, the troglodytes in area 12, some dissatisfied lizardmen and frogfolk and the Darkers. Kirish will take control of the city and, after some time, he will open the Verdant Pool to the Blight Swamp. He will fully convert to the

cause of Nyx, allowing the existence of other religions but discouraging any Outer Being worship. The new lizardmen city will probably be caught up in intrigue eventually, as Kirish will support the Darkers but Shaga could be willing to support the fairies of level 9 and the hutaakan priests will certainly aid the church of Ixion. The newly liberated Mokrath may well descend again into civil conflict quite soon.

After his defeat, Akrash may hide or be destroyed. If he hides, he will plan to aid The Last One when he comes back, and will try to contact him in secret. He could also escape to level 10 and join The Last One there. The final plan of Akrash however will still be to take control of the Starlake to call the Outer Beings into the world.





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Page 78:	[Image: Perfynn] "M_1", Copyright 2003 V Shane, Arcane Publisher's Edition, Used with permission
Page 81:	[Canolbarth Forest 1007 AC] Original map by Thorfinn Tait, Based upon canon material. Used with permission
Page 90:	[Canolbarth Forest, 1013 AC] Map by Robin, Used with permission
Page 94:	[Canolbarth Forest, 1018 AC] Map by Robin, Used with permission
Page 95:	[Canolbarth Forest, 1020 AC] Map by Robin, Used with permission
Page 97:	[Canolbarth Forest, 1100 AC] Map by Robin, Used with permission
Page 103:	[Canolbarth Forest, 1150 AC] Map by Robin, Used with permission
Page 107:	[Canolbarth Forest, between 1200 and 1250 AC] Map by Robin, Used with permission
Page 107:	[Towering Canolbarth Trees] Original illustration by Robin, Used with permission

- Page 116: **[Image: Stalkbrow area]**
Original cartography by Thorfinn Tait and DesertNomad
- Page 117: **[Image: Stalkbrow map]**
Original cartography by Desert Nomad
- Page 118: **[Image: Vorsh Plains]**
Chimineas Ranch, Carrizo plains, California, USA, photo by Linda Tanner via Wikimedia commons. [Source](#)
- Page 118: **[Image: Dry canyons]**
Chino canyon, California, USA, photo by Raymond Shobe via Wikimedia commons. [Source](#)
- Page 119: **[Image: Stalkbrow badlands]**
South Dakota, USA; Badlands photo by Belissarius via Wikimedia commons. [Source](#)
- Page 119: **[Image: Stalkbrow hills]**
Cheltenham Badlands, South Dakota, USA, photo by Hgwiazda *via Wikimedia commons*. [Source](#)
- Page 119: **[Image: Ragged River]**
Paravani river, Georgia, photo by Anjči via Wikimedia commons. [Source](#)
- Page 119: **[Image: The Black Spring Creek]**
Lester River in Duluth, MN, USA. Photo by Aaron Roe Fulkerson via Wikimedia commons. [Source](#)
- Page 120: **[Image: The Near Delta]**
Swamp at peat mining near Rudzensk, Belarus, photo by Alex Zelenko via Wikimedia commons. [Source](#)
- Page 120: **[Image: The Lakes of Selinar]**
Banff National Park, Alberta, Canada: Moraine Lake photo by Tobias Alt via Wikimedia commons. [Source](#)
- Page 120: **[Image: The Blighted Forests]**
Langaa, Denmark, photo by Malene Thyssen via Wikimedia commons. [Source](#)
- Page 121: **[Image: Stalkbrow locations]**
Original cartography by DesertNomad

- Page 126: [Image: Map of Vesperlands and Surrounding Regions]
Map of the Vesperlands Region, Original work by John Calvin
- used by permission
- Page 128: [Image: Vesper Elf]
Vesper elf, Original work by I. Calvin - used by permission
- Page 129: [Image: Map of the Vesperlands]
Map of the Vesperlands, Original work by John Calvin - used
by permission
- Page 140: [Image: Pirate's Isle]
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- Pages [Image: Pirate Treasure] [Image: Pirate Ship]
140 & 148: William McAusland, Stock Art [Used with Permission]
- Page 142: [Image: Buccaneer]
Howard Pyle, "Captain Scarfield" [Public Domain] via [Source](#)
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- Page 143: [Image: Pirate]
Howard Pyle, "Captain Keitt" [Public Domain] via Wikimedia [Source](#)
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- Page 152: **[Image: Wyrksteeth Coat of Arms]**
Coat of Arms of the Breitbach Bürresheim family via [Source](#)
Wikimedia commons.
- Page 155: **[Image: Wyrksteeth Map]**
Modified by Sturm from Robin D's Detailed map of
Northwestern Brun.
- Page 156: **[Image: Dragonborn]**
Dragon holding a goose" (with St. George in the background).
Designs for the theater, ca. 1850, by Richard Wynne Keene via [Source](#)
Wikimedia commons.
- Page 157: **[Image: Coat of Keamptar]**
Coat of arms of *Östanstång*, in *Östergötland*, Sweden, via [Source](#)
Wikimedia commons
- Page 159: **[Image: Sheidinaer]**
An illustration of the princess and dragon from The Two
Brothers, a story published in Grimms' Fairy Tales by Elenore
Abbott via Wikimedia commons [Source](#)
- Page 161: **[Image: Lupin or Werewolf]**
Image from the Book of Hours, via Wikimedia commons [Source](#)

- Page 161: **[Image: Portrait of Julius Penhaligon]**
Portrait of a man by Salvator Rosa via Wikimedia commons [Source](#)
- Page 163: **[Image: Portrait of Sylvie]**
Portrait of Lucrezia as Poetry by Salvator Rosa, via Wikimedia commons [Source](#)
- Page 164: **[Image: Haldis partisans carrying Fredek to safety]**
Birkebeiner skiers carrying Prince Haakon to safety during the winter of 1206, painting by Knud Bergslien via Wikimedia commons. [Source](#)
- Page 165: **[Image: Portrait of Marcus Thorsson]**
Portrait of Jahan Shah by Salvator Rosa, via Wikimedia commons [Source](#)
- Page 166: **[Image: The Frodhulf Estuary]**
Autumn - On the Hudson river, Jasper Francis Cropsey, 1860 [Public domain] via Wikimedia Commons [Source](#)
- Page 169: **[Image: The Old Fort]**
Ruins of the Trakai Castle, Wojciech Gerson, 1855 [Public domain] via Wikimedia Commons [Source](#)
- Page 170: **[Image: The Thing]**
Aasgrim follows Snorri Goði to his booth, Andreas Bloch, 1898 [Public domain] via Wikimedia Commons [Source](#)
- Page 177: **[Image: The Syrrak Dwarves]**
The Dwarfs at Work, engraving by George Pearson based on a design by W. J. Wiegand, 1871 [Public domain] via Wikimedia Commons [Source](#)
- Page 178: **[Image: Howls-in-the-Night]**
A detail of **Schedel'sche Weltchronik** (sheet XII), an Incunabulum of Hartmann Schedel, showing a Cynocephalus [Public domain] via Wikimedia Commons [Source](#)
- [Image: Akrash]**
- Page 182: Sobek bas relief in Kom Ombo temple via Wikimedia commons [Source](#)
- Page 186: **[Image: Map of Mokrath, Level 8]**
Original cartography by Francesco Defferrari
- {Age 186: **[Image: The Levels of Koskatep]**
Original cartography by Francesco Defferrari
- Page 188: **[Image: Decoration of the Frogfolk temple]**
Altar of the Frog from Temple Mayor in Mexico City via Wikimedia commons. [Source](#)

Page 190:	[Image: The aquatic dinosaurs] Muraenosaurus leedsi by Dmitry Bogdanov via Wikimedia commons.	Source
Page 191:	[Image: Image of human slave adoring Akrash] Photo by Olaf Taush from Kom Ombo museum via Wikimedia commons.	Source
Pge 192:	[Image: Entrance of Akrash's Palace] Kom Ombo temple photo by Karen Green via Wikimedia commons.	Source
Page 197:	[Image: Great column of the temple] Kom Ombo temple photo by Karen Green via Wikimedia commons.	Source
Page 198:	[Image: Wall decoration] Bilbao cemetery photo by Zarateman via Wikimedia commons.	Source
Page 208:	[Image: Cover of issue 11] Proposed cover of issue 11 by Sturm, using Bellerophon, Pegasus and the Chimera by Peter Paul Rubens.	Source
Back cover:	[Image: Back Cover of issue 10] Backcover of issue 10 by Agathokles, using Spring by Alfons Mucha.	Source

Notes

NEXT ISSUE



(Not final cover)

Alphatia and Thyatis, the two greatest empires of Mystara. Bitter rivals engaging in repeated wars, shaping the fates of entire regions and countless peoples. Both considered beacons of civilization and lands of opportunity, yet ruled by despot regimes with lavish estates and impoverished slums. Bloodthirsty slavers and greedy colonists, poised to rob native peoples of everything, to be resisted at any cost. Decadent and depraved nations nearing self-destruction; or vibrant societies, poised to thrust the world into a new innovative age? Undaunted explorers from both have roamed all across Mystara...and beyond! Discover the truth about Mystara's greatest Empires!

THYATIS AND ALPHATIA

Anticipated contents include:

- An Atlas of the Isle of Dawn
- Languages and cultures of Thyatis
- The Lost civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia
- A Gazetteer of Carytion
- The wilderlands inside the Empires
- Alphatian and Thyatian explorers
- An Interview with Cartographer Thorfinn Tait
- Another level of Koskatep

... and much more!

YOUR OPINIONS?

The Editorial Team welcomes your feedback on this issue of THRESHOLD are welcomed. Please post your comments either by posting in [The Piazza Forums](http://theplazza.org.uk)

Or by email to the Editorial address: Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com

Please begin the subject line with the tag "[LETTER]"



Submission Guidelines

Proposals

All proposal submissions can be sent by mail to the editors at the following address Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com, and must be received by the proposal deadline†. The Threshold editorial team will contact you within 7 days of the proposal deadline regarding the status of your proposal.

Submission proposals should be sent inline in the mail, using the following subject format: [ISSUE#][Proposal] <title of your article>

The mail content should include the following:

- Proposed article title
- The type of article being proposed (short story, adventure, geographical location, organization, etc...)
- A one paragraph description of what the article is about.
- An estimated word count of the article (articles should range anywhere from 1000 to 7000 words, depending on the type of article submitted).

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Manuscripts should only be submitted after you proposal has been accepted by the Threshold editorial staff, and must be received by the manuscript deadline†. When submitting a manuscript file, please use the following naming convention:

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The mail content should include the following:

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- An attached document containing the article contents.
- The final word count of the article.

Other types of contributions: the editorial team will consider on a case by case basis other types of contributions. Please contact us to inquire if and how we can accommodate unusual contribution formats.

The following guidelines apply to different types of submissions:

Illustrations: please submit art and maps in lossless format (e.g., PNG).

Articles: manuscript submissions can be sent by mail as plain text, doc(x) or odt, or shared as Google Doc. The issue editor will create a shared document (for each article) to allow the author and editorial team to work on it. Articles can be as short as a single page, or as long as 6 pages, depending on the specific content. The editorial team will do its best to accommodate the contributions, but especially long works may be split over several issues.

Tables: Tables should be numbered (Table X: Name of Table), and any references in the article should refer to that table number (and not to "the table below," for example).

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†Refer to “*Call for Contributions*” (page 6) for next issue deadline dates.

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THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine



Elven Realms

Leaving familiar cultivated fields and pastures, you wind your way through the underbrush of bordering forest. Increasingly you feel as though your party is being watched. Only now do you understand... this is not your home! Suddenly, you come face to face with a leather-clad warrior. The sound of bow-strings drawn taut encompass you, and you realise you are surrounded. "Be you friend or foe!?" the warrior commands. The delicate balance of life lays in your reply...

Within this issue, you will find alternate elven histories, calendars and holidays; new elven class variants; and numerous expansion settings. In addition; the third in depth installment on the Wrymsteeth; the next level of Koskatep, Threshold Magazine's ongoing mega-dungeon; and a Norwold adventure round out the issue. Does your party die upon the points of elven arrows, make it back to civilization, or become forever mesmerized by the seemingly endless beauty of the forests?

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